Priest says AFP general in cahoots with Abu

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2001 ★★ 38 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 242 ₱15

The other Lacson: Ex-hubby paid ₱6.8M

PERTH, AUSTRALIA—A coroner will allow a Filipino witness in the case against Rose Lacson to be paid A$250,000 (P6.8 million) to give evidence at an inquest into the death of multi-millionaire mining tycoon Lang Hancock.

Coroner Alastair Hope ruled here Tuesday it was in order for Gina Rinehart, Hancock's daughter and Australia's richest woman, to pay the money to Julian Teodoro, the former hus-

THE/ A12

Serge O refuses to yield floor

BY C. AVENDAÑO AND A. N. NOCUM

"I'LL HAVE sex on the floor if I have to," Sen. Serge Osmeña III told the INQUIRER when asked how far he was willing to go on filibus-

SERGE/ A13

NAKU, GAGAWIN LAHAT... MAPIGILAN LANG!

Corpus-Lacson battle heats up: It's a trap

BY CARLITO PABLO, ARMAND NOCUM AND MICHAEL LIM UBAC

STICKING to their respective guns, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and his accuser, military intelligence head Victor Corpus, yesterday faced off and dared each other to sign waivers exposing their bank accounts to investigators' scrutiny.

Corpus branded as a "trap" the senator's offer to give him "special power of attorney" to withdraw deposits allegedly worth hundreds of millions of dollars from bank accounts abroad, and dared him to instead waive his rights under international bank secrecy laws.

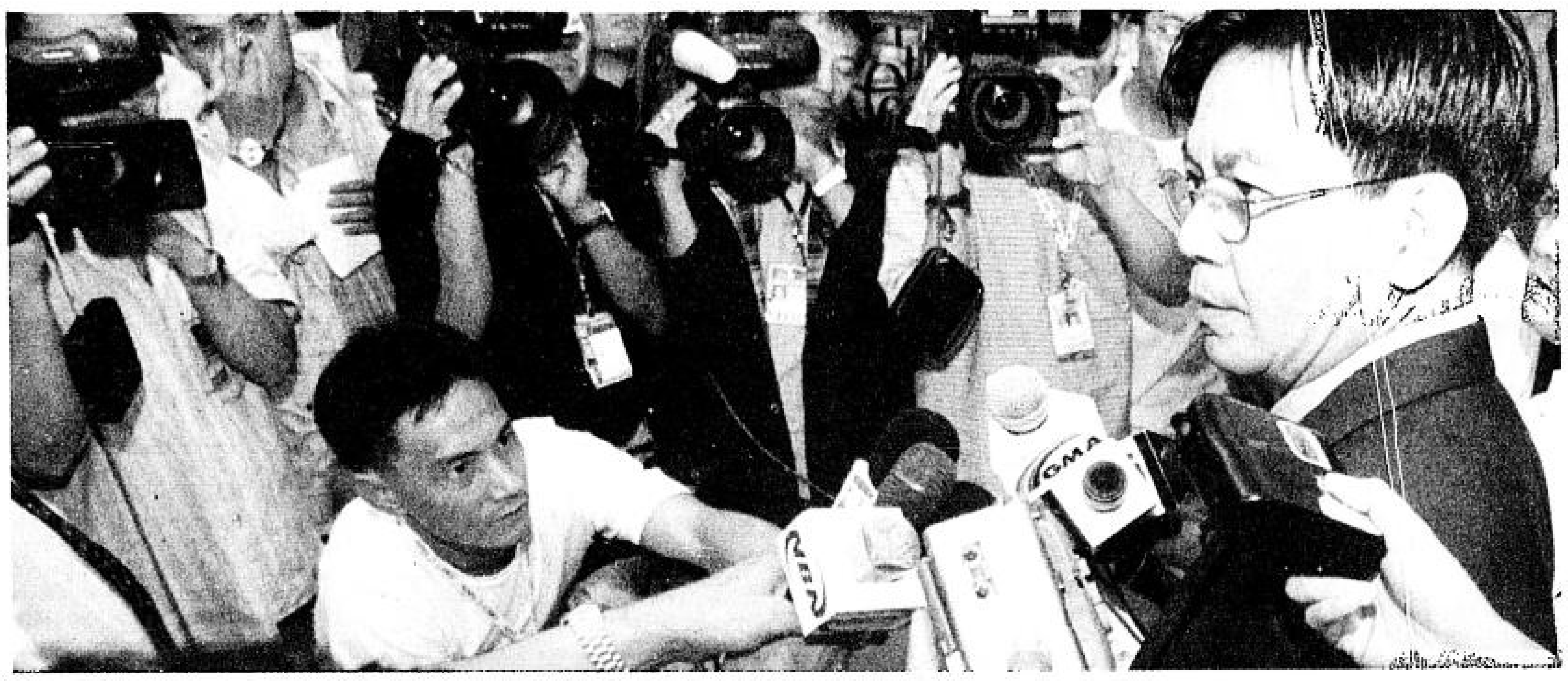
He added that Lacson's document was also useless because the senator had misspelled Corpus' name and only authorized him to withdraw deposits that were probably transferred by now anyway.

Justice officials and private prosecutors

CORPUS/ A13

US Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, US House Asia-Pacific subcommittee vice chair.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO



MAN of the hour, Sen. Panfilo Lacson: The statement simply said there is an investigation; it does not say there is a finding. JESS YUSON

US probe confirmed

Lacson: Gov't story on million-$ accounts needs propping up

BY CHRISTINE HERRERA, MICHAEL LIM UBAC AND MARTIN P. MARFIL

A WASHINGTON-based official yesterday confirmed that the US government was "seriously investigating" the suspected involvement of Sen. Panfilo Lacson in the entry of large amounts of money into the United States.

Al Santoli, senior national security and foreign policy adviser to US Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that there was "substantial reason" for US anti-money laundering and drug enforcement agencies to investigate allegations of Philippine intelligence officers that Lacson and ex-President Joseph Estrada broke international laws.

Santoli said there were "very real incidents that triggered the investigation" into Lacson and Estrada's alleged money-laundering activities in the United States.

Asked which US law enforcement agencies were involved in the probe, Santoli said "all agencies that deal with international law" in the areas of money laundering and drug trafficking.

In a statement sent earlier in the day to the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), Santoli said he was able to confirm the ongoing investigation with "appropriate US government sources."

US PROBE/ A13

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

MILITARY honors for President Macapagal on arrival at the Palace of Malaysian King Yang Dipertuan Agong who hosts a banquet for the President on her second day in Kuala Lumpur.

Laundering money means crime pays

MONEY laundering, in which Sen. Panfilo Lacson is accused of engaging, "poses a serious national and international security threat," according to a paper prepared by the US State Department.

It has "potentially devastating economic, security and social consequences," and "in extreme cases, it can lead to the virtual takeover of legitimate government," said the paper titled "The Consequences of Money Laundering and Financial Crime."

The paper was written by John McDowell and Gary Novis, senior policy adviser and program analyst,

LAUNDERING/ A13

SECOND DAY

GMA woos Malaysian businessmen

BY CATHY C. YAMSUAN

KUALA LUMPUR (via PLDT)—After securing a ceasefire deal with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday called on businessmen to invest in the East Asean Growth Area (Eaga), a special economic zone that includes Mindanao.

On the second day of her state visit, Ms Macapagal told a business forum that the zone was vital to Manila's plan in making a success of the truce that her government and the Moro separatist rebels signed on Tuesday.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations established in 1994 the special economic zone that covers southern Philippines, Brunei, northern Indonesia and eastern Malaysia.

The East Asean Growth Area showed promise of emerging as a strong, integrated economic grouping, but investments dried up due to the 1997 Asian economic crisis and worsening conflicts in Mindanao as well as several provinces in Indonesia.

GMA/ A12

Priest says general conniving with Abu

'We no longer suspect, we have strong evidence'

BY JULIE ALIPALA-INOT
PDI Mindanao Bureau

LAMITAN, Basilan—Catholic priest Cirilo Nacorda yesterday accused five officers of the Armed Forces of conniving with Abu Sayyaf hostage-takers, allowing the kidnappers to escape from a hospital compound here on June 2.

Nacorda identified the officials as Visayas Command chief Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, the former 1st Tabak Division commander; Col. Jovenal Narcise, the previous acting 103rd Army Brigade commander; two Narcise aides, Capt. Hubert Acierto and Capt. Nicolas Quemado; and the executive officer of the 18th Infantry Battalion Maj. Eliseo Campued.

Dominguez, in a phone interview, said Nacorda's allegation was "too much."

"I have been wanting to understand his traumatic experience last June 2, but this has gone far and I'm not going to take this sitting down," Dominguez said.

He plans to take legal action against the priest who "has not only destroyed my name," but his career and the reputation of his family.

On June 2, a group of Abu Sayyaf bandits and their hostages from Dos Palmas in Palawan were trapped by soldiers and policemen at the Don Jose Maria Torres Memorial Hospital here. But the kidnappers and selected hostages managed to escape through the hospital's back door.

"Now I'm reserving my right to defend myself, my profession, my

PRIEST/ A12

Bid to clone man sparks bitter fight

A WORLD of cloned humans?

With angry words and apparent determination, three researchers told a meeting of scientists in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday that they were not swayed by warnings of possible medical risks or ethical objections and would soon try to clone human beings.

Italian doctor Severino Antinori, who helped a 62-year-old woman have a child through vitro fertilization (fertilization in a test tube) in 1994, announced before a National Academy of Sciences panel that he intends to continue with plans to provide cloned children for infertile couples.

He said he would take steps to avoid babies being born with severe abnormalities.

He earlier told media that he hoped to begin the research within

BID/ A12

Second FRONT PAGE

MAGDEDEMANDA NA!

Erap files ₱100M suit vs Corpus, PDI

By Donna S. Cueto

JAILED ex-President Joseph Estrada yesterday directed one of his lawyers to file a P100-million libel suit against military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus and the Inquirer even as the Ombudsman launched an inquiry into allegations that Estrada and Sen. Panfilo Lacson had laundered millions of ill-gotten dollars in the United States, Canada and Hong Kong.

Lawyer Cleofe Verzola yesterday said she would file the libel suit against Corpus and the Inquirer before Friday either in Pasig City, Quezon City, or Mandaluyong City.

She said she would ask the Sandiganbayan today to allow Estrada to leave the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, where he is detained, so he could personally file the suit in the lower courts.

Corpus alleged in a report to President Macapagal-Arroyo that Estrada and Lacson, his former national police chief, funneled $728.5 million in profits from drug deals, kidnappings and other criminal activities into joint accounts.

If the inquiry establishes probable cause, Estrada and Lacson could face criminal charges, Deputy Overall Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio said in a television interview.

"The Office of the Ombudsman ordered the creation of a three-man panel last Sunday and the team has been given a period of 30 days within which to wind up findings in this investigation without prejudice to their submitting periodic reports on the matter," he added.

Both Estrada and Lacson have denied the allegations.

"The report is libelous because it is damaging and untruthful… because it is untruthful, per se it is libelous," Verzola said.

"The accounts they are talking about are non-existent," she said. "You cannot produce something out of thin air."

Verzola said she would advise Estrada to issue a waiver to the banks mentioned in the Corpus report, to further prove that he had no accounts there.

Asked if it was possible to file a new plunder case against Estrada based on the alleged foreign bank accounts, Verzola said: "Yes, but where is the evidence?"

She said the government had no evidence, as of now.

Verzola even dared the Ombudsman to produce the evidence and file another plunder case.

She claimed the prosecutors had no evidence to back up the earlier plunder case either.

Asked if Estrada had foreign bank accounts, Verzola declined to answer, saying this was "privileged communication" between lawyer and client.

"What we are saying is those accounts mentioned in the report were not true," she said.

Customs, police blamed for escape

By Agnes E. Donato

IMMIGRATION Commissioner Andrea Domingo yesterday blamed the customs bureau and the police for failing to alert immigration officials of the likely escape of fugitive police officers Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao.

Domingo said she would step down willingly if President Macapagal-Arroyo were to believe that the escape of the two had been caused by neglect on the part of her agency.

Speaking at the weekly Ciudad Fernandina forum, Domingo said the BID was still checking immigration departure records and flight data to find out which flight Mancao and Aquino took when they left the country via the Mactan International Airport almost a month ago.

The two police officers, who were protégés of beleaguered Sen. Panfilo Lacson, used fake passports in taking a Cathay Pacific flight to Hong Kong where they took a connecting flight to the United States. They were said to have crossed into Canada, where they are now believed to be hiding.

Domingo said the flight numbers would help identify the immigration officers who might have helped the two quit the country despite a hold-departure order against them.

"I will strangle them," said Domingo of the immigration officers.

"Seriously, administrative and criminal charges will be filed against them."

While the BID is responsible for the implementation of hold-departure orders issued by the courts, Domingo said it is the duty of the Bureau of Customs and the Philippine National Police to warn the bureau that the two officers were likely to escape.

"No alert from our allied agencies was given to us," she said.

She said Mancao and Aquino could still be returned through extradition, as they could now be considered "undocumented aliens."

Domingo said the BID was short of personnel, with less than 800 employees nationwide.

She said the bureau needs at least 100 more immigration officials and another 100 intelligence operatives.

Although there are about 2,000 applicants for various positions, the BID cannot hire anyone now because of budgetary constraints, Domingo said.

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Cops on high alert

THE PHILIPPINE National Police is on high alert after rumors spread of a destabilization plot against the government during President Macapagal-Arroyo's official visit to Malaysia.

PNP Directorate for Police Community Relations head Thompson Lantion told reporters PNP chief Director General Leandro Mendoza has ordered the formation of Task Force Katatagan to keep the peace during Macapagal's absence.

The task force, Lantion said, is composed of some 2,000 policemen from the PNP's National Capital Region police office.

PNP Directorate for Operations Director Edgar Aglipay confirmed the formation of the task force but declined to reveal any details.

The PNP said it will lower its alert status on the return of the President.

Last week, a white paper was reportedly circulating in Camps Crame and Aguinaldo, headquarters of the PNP and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, respectively, warning about the possibility a coup d'etat during Macapagal's trip. *Alcuin Papa*

Estrada lawyers will give no evidence in perjury case

THE LAWYERS of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada plan to introduce no evidence at all to counter the mountain of documents that prosecutors have vowed to present to prove their perjury case against the deposed leader.

The Estrada lawyers, led by Cleofe Verzola, did not bring a single document to present as evidence during the scheduled marking of exhibits yesterday afternoon.

"We have no documents for marking," said Verzola, who said the defense's only witness would be Estrada himself who will make a court appearance "at the proper time" to give his testimony.

During the marking of exhibits yesterday, prosecutors led by special prosecution officer Raymundo Julio Olaguer brought several folders of documents constituting the evidence against Estrada.

But even before the marking could begin, Verzola made a "manifestation" that the documents relating to bank accounts and Estrada-linked corporations that had not been mentioned in the amended information should not be marked as evidence.

"The prosecution cannot mark any document not mentioned in the amended information," she said.

"With respect to the bank accounts, no bank account is mentioned in the amended information (so) no bank account should be marked because they are not relevant to the case," she said in court.

Verzola claimed that only documents regarding the five corporations mentioned in the amended information could be accepted and marked as evidence in the perjury case.

The first exhibit or evidence presented for marking was the sworn statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) of Estrada as of Dec. 31, 1999.

Other documents presented related to the Estrada bank accounts at Keppel Bank, Security Bank and Asia Universal Bank, as well as documents pertaining to corporations, which had not been mentioned in the amended information.

After the July 27 arraignment, the prosecutors had sought to amend for the third time the information in the perjury case, so they could introduce evidence on at least 51 more corporations, which were not included in the charge sheet.

The five corporations included in the amended information were the following: Valhalla Resources Co.; Becks Resources Co.; KB Space Holdings Co.; Verdant Resources Co.; and VFC Realty and Dev. Corp.

In the original information filed on April 4, there were eight corporations mentioned where Estrada allegedly had holdings.

Three of the eight firms—St. Peters Holding Co.; Erap Muslim Youth Foundation, Inc.; and Fountainbleu, Inc.; and Holdings Corp.—were later removed by the prosecution.

The prosecution said Estrada had declared net worth of only P35,862,739.97 as of Dec. 31, 1999, and declared holdings in only three corporations: JELP Real Estate and Development Corp., J.E. Inc., and Feluisa Dev. Corp.

It also alleged that Estrada had P1.117 billion in bank accounts.

The information was first amended on May 15, when the prosecution delcted the portion alleging that Estrada had P1.117 billion in undeclared bank accounts and reduced the number of firms where the ousted president allegedly had interests from eight to five.

The prosecution also claimed that Estrada "had more than" the P35.86 million that he declared as his real net worth in his 1999 statement of assets and liabilities. *Donna S. Cueto*

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Abu have until Nov–AFP chief

ISABELA, BASILAN—Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva vowed yesterday to crush the Abu Sayyaf bandit group and rescue its two American and 19 Filipino hostages by November.

"We expect it to end by November considering the tactical operation and the variables," General Villanueva told reporters during a visit to Basilan, where the hostages are being held.

"We have dismantled their mass base," he said, citing the arrest of more than 100 suspected Abu Sayyaf supporters over the past month.

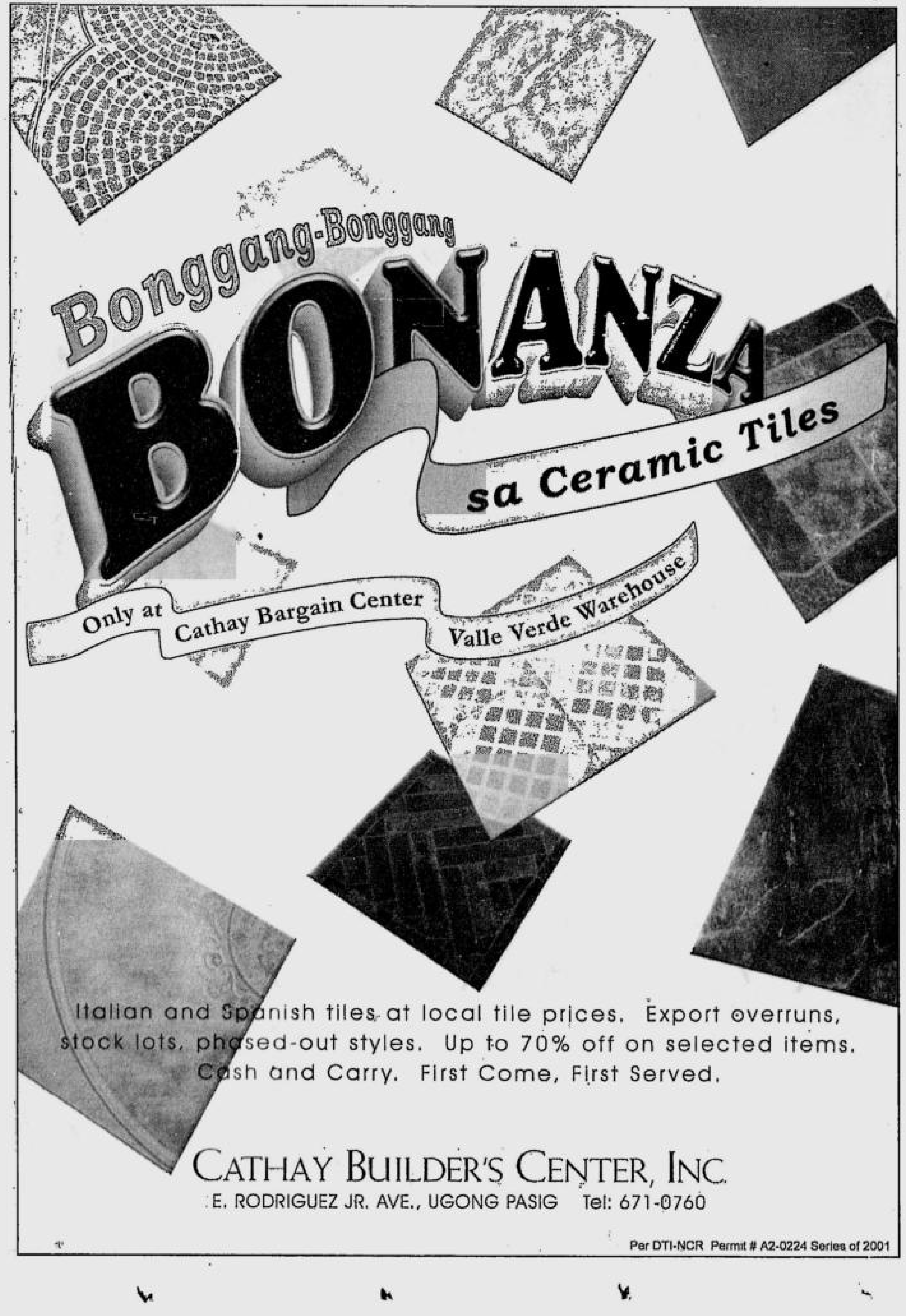
Because of this, "the Abu Sayyaf is starting to react with violent actions," he said.

The Abu Sayyaf, notorious for attacks on Christians and foreigners in the south, launched their latest kidnapping spree on May 27, snatching three Americans and 17 Filipinos from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan and spiriting them to the jungles of Basilan.

They have since freed some of their Filipino captives, reportedly for hefty ransom payments, but seized more Filipino hostages.

Last week they abducted 34 residents and beheaded 10 men. The rest of the captives were later let go.

Asked why it was taking the military so long to end the crisis, Villanueva said: "We are sticking to reality. We are trying to systemize the mode of operation." *AFP*



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Behest loans to officials to be probed

DEPUTY Speaker Raul Gonzalez filed yesterday a resolution seeking an investigation into behest loans reportedly granted by government financial institutions to favored public officials and private corporations.

The Iloilo solon filed House Resolution No. 100 seeking a probe of the Government Service Insurance System, Social Security System, Development Bank of the Philippines, LandBank, and other GFIs "for loans extended to government officials, private corporations and groups which have not been repaid."

Gonzalez said the probe will also try to unearth "the amount of exposure of these institutions and the reasons why the loans remain uncollected."

The uncollected loans have become non-performing assets to the prejudice of the government and the people, Gonzalez said.

He said the conspiracy to keep such behest loans under wraps could have been one of the reasons for "the power plays in some GFIs, such as the SSS." *Rocky Nazareno*

Bill filed pegging daily wage to cost of living

By Rocky Nazareno

ALBAY Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro has filed House Bill 1377 to provide workers with a daily living wage (DLW).

The Department of Labor and Employment has computed the DLW at P500 for a family of six, according to Lagman-Luistro.

Lagman-Luistro, daughter of activist and former representative Edcel Lagman, said workers have the constitutional right "to be paid a minimum wage with a real value equal to the cost of living of an average working class family."

She said the labor sector should address the concern for a minimum wage based on the cost of living rather than a simple increase in pay.

"Fourteen years after the people had enshrined the right of labor to a living wage in the highest law of the land, Congress has yet to enact an enabling law to guarantee workers' enjoyment of this right," Lagman-Luistro said.

Under the second-term representative's proposed Living Wage Law, "full-time employees and workers in the public and private agricultural and non-agricultural sectors shall receive a living wage equivalent to the cost of living for a family of six."

Lagman-Luistro said that with the daily minimum pay now at P250, there is a need to look for wage and non-wage benefits to make up for the P250-deficit to the daily living wage.

While additional wage benefits would have to be determined, Lagman-Luistro said there are numerous non-wage benefits that could be used to boost workers' wages to the daily minimum.

These include proposals to exempt workers from deductions for health care and housing contributions that could amount to P100-per-day per worker.

Together with the P50 cost of living allowance that has been proposed, this would mean a DLW of P400.

"We would only have to look for another P100," Lagman-Luistro said.

She said there are other proposals like exempting minimum wage earners from having to pay value-added tax and the granting of rice subsidies to them by the government.

"While there would be no actual increase in wages, their salary deductions would be greatly diminished," Lagman-Luistro said.

Workers and militant groups have been pressing for a hike in the minimum wage in the face of the worsening economic climate.

While employers and regional wage boards have suggested a minimal hike of P27, the workers have demanded at least a P150 increase in the daily minimum wage.

GMA hit for letting war games continue

THE MILITANT Kilusan Para sa Demokrasya yesterday scored President Macapagal-Arroyo for allowing the resumption of war games this week under the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

The KPD said it was ironic that the war games, dubbed Flash Pistol 01-1, would resume after they were postponed when a stray bomb killed two boys in Toledo City, Cebu, during last year's exercises. The KPD marked yesterday the anniversary of those deaths.

"Ms Macapagal's concept of military modernization comes at the expense of the safety and welfare of the people," KPD secretary general Millet Morante said. "This only demonstrates her subservience to the dictates of the United States."

The KPD accused the President of undermining "the people's triumph with the removal of the US bases." *Jerome Aning*

'Open skies' good for tourism–Gordon

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's "open skies" aviation policy will reap dividends for the country's moribund tourism industry, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon said.

"The availability of air seats is directly proportional to the number of visitors entering the country," he said.

The President's plan to ease air space restrictions in order to boost tourism will also "dispel negative opinions about travel to the Philippines by showing visitors how convenient a trip to our country can be," Gordon said.

He said the tourism department has signed agreements with several international airline companies, including industry giants Northwest Airlines and British Airways, to boost air travel to the country.

The Department of Tourism has also successfully negotiated for more flights by Air Macau and the Japanese charter flight company, JAS, he said.

The department has adopted a "hubs and spokes" strategy for tourism development under which major international gateways act as the hubs, or the center of airline activities, to which are connected the spokes, or the outlying destinations, that can be reached by other means of transport.

Gordon said this strategy of attracting international travelers is fast gaining ground abroad.

More foreign airline companies have vowed to increase flights to the Philippines, he said.

JAS, the latest addition to the list of DOT airline allies, has promised to increase the number of flights between the Philippines and Japan.

It has committed to bring in five more flights from Osaka while also pledging to publish promotional articles about the Philippines in Japanese airline publications.

Baguio wants first crack at Marcos homes

BAGUIO CITY—The city government is demanding first crack at four mansions owned by the Marcoses and their cronies here, which the Presidential Commission on Good Government has placed on the auction block.

Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda said the city would assert its stake over 2.5 hectares along Outlook Drive here—which the PCGG has valued at P73 million—to pay for an outstanding P300 million debt of the national government due to the non-payment of real estate back taxes on its Baguio assets.

Most local businessmen remain wary about the Marcos estates, however, which have been left in a sorry state of disrepair since they were sequestered in 1986.

Lawyer Teofisto Rondez, a real estate lawyer here, said the PCGG might have overvalued the Marcos properties, which are located in a prime real estate zone.

Businessmen said they were worried about the legal documents of the sequestered assets.

Carlos Honorio Estepa, Cordillera governor of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told the INQUIRER local businessmen want assurances from the PCGG that the Marcos property is no longer being contested in court. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, with an AFP report*

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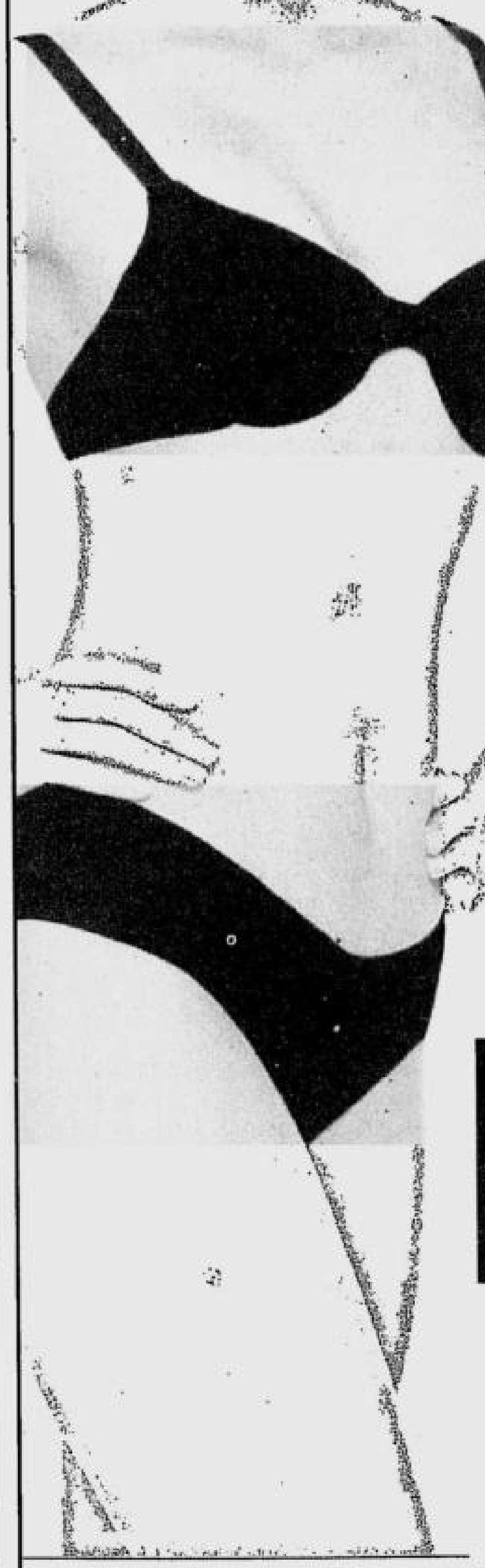

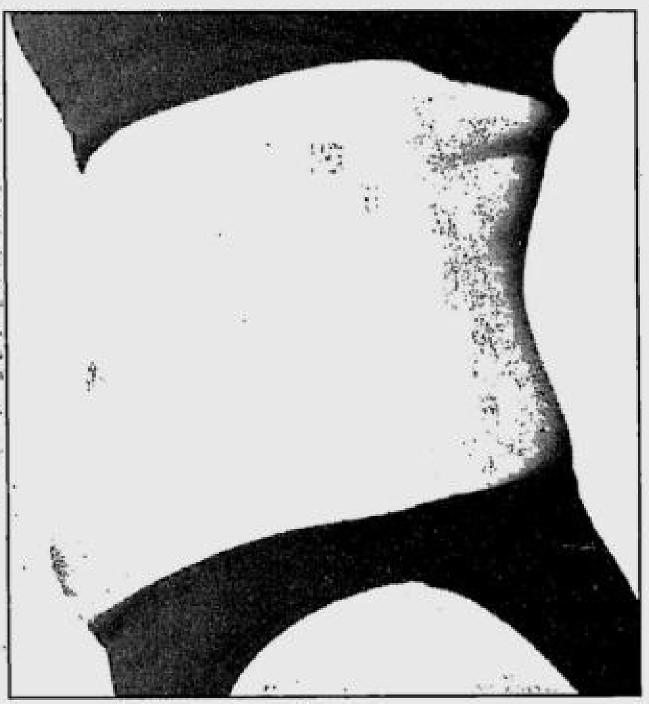

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Founding Chairman

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Senate on trial

EDITORIAL

THE SUPPRESSION by the majority of the contents of the second envelope, containing information on then President Joseph Estrada's bank accounts, during the impeachment trial heavily damaged the independence and integrity of the Senate. That decision aborted the trial and triggered the civil uprising that led to the collapse of the Estrada administration.

After the May elections, the Senate, like other damaged Philippine institutions, should have moved swiftly to repair the damage and restore public confidence in it. But even before it can put up the scaffolding, it already faces another test of its capacity to find its direction in the charges of money laundering against one of its new members, Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Lacson gave official cognizance to the report and asked the Senate to investigate on Monday when he delivered a privilege speech defending himself from the charges. The Senate is again on trial, like it was during the impeachment proceedings, on the issue of whether it can conduct a parliamentary inquiry that would get to the bottom of the allegations. Another issue it faces is whether it will act as a protective old boys' club for one of its members, given that the tradition of fraternal ties among senators are as strong and often as blind as the bond among policemen, military officers and even fraternity members.

Even before the Senate could define the scope of its inquiry or decide which committee would conduct the investigation, some senators are already raising peripheral issues that tend to shift the focus away from the charges against Lacson. For example, Sen. John Osmeña and Sen. Rodolfo Biazon have said they are filing a resolution directing the committees on national defense and on finance to inquire into the "intrusion" of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines into the functions of the police. They said they would like to know where the Isafp got the money to finance the investigation overseas by a joint Isafp-Philippine National Police team that tried to track down Lacson's assets abroad. They, of course, ignore the fact that the Armed Forces has been engaged in domestic peacekeeping, and that money laundering, especially if it is linked to drug trafficking, is a national security problem, and not merely a police problem.

Sen. Vicente Sotto has gotten into the act with a resolution asking the defense committee to inquire into the "possible involvement of the Armed Forces in the possible fabrication of evidence."

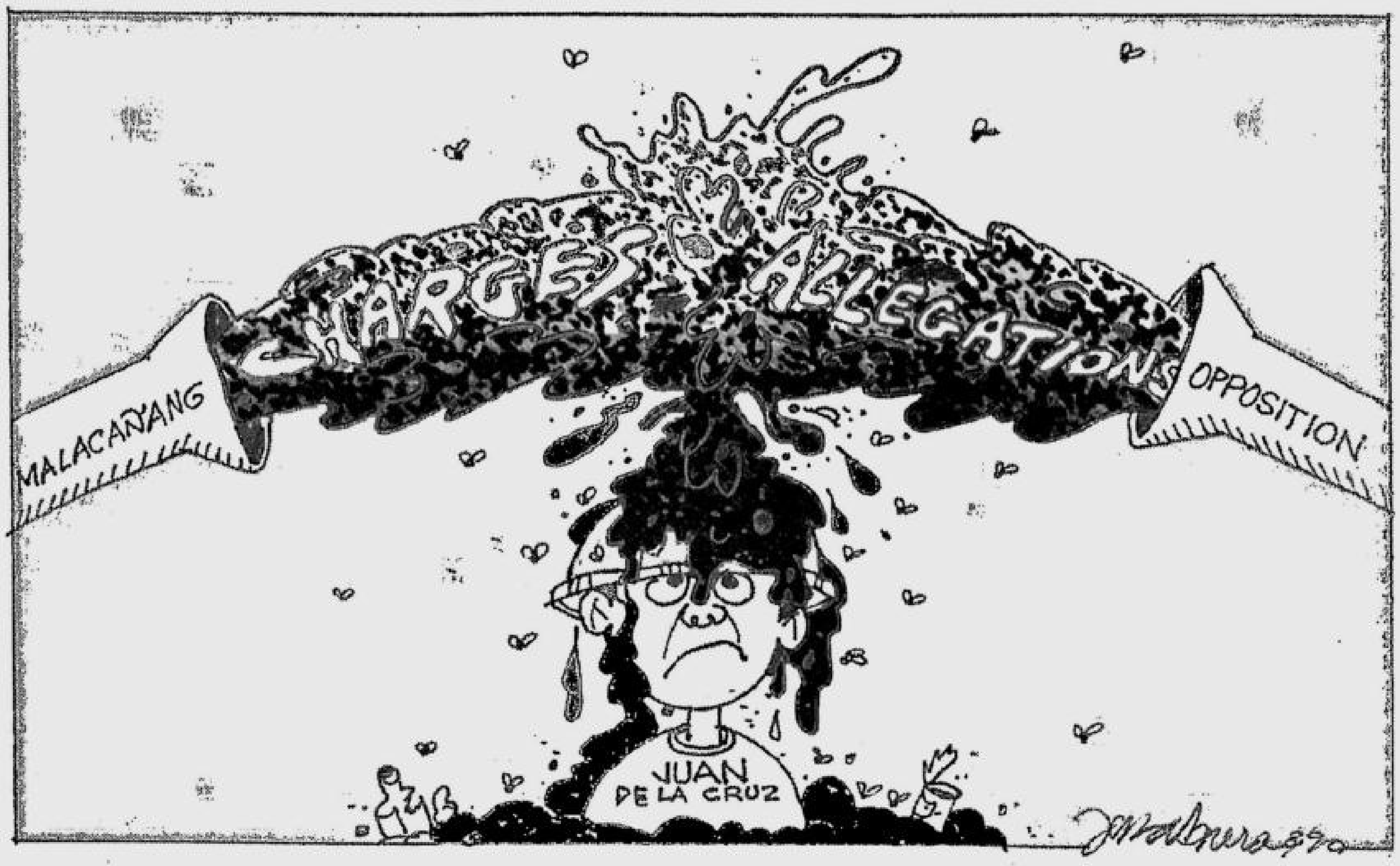
In none of these intentions or resolutions is there an interest shown in determining whether the allegations contained in the Isafp-PNP report against Lacson are founded on facts. Osmeña, Biazon and Sotto are seeking to rechannel the report to peripheral issues that will certainly remove the spotlight from Lacson. From the tenor of their resolutions, the Isafp and its chief, Col. Victor Corpus, are now the focus of the senators' concerns, not Lacson.

Some senators who brought the Senate into disrepute on account of their behavior during the impeachment trial or by taking cash gifts from Estrada are now circling the wagons in defense of Lacson. They are the ones who are most outspoken in defending the independence and integrity of the Senate, which they damaged by their partisan actions during the trial.

The Senate needs more credible defenders to restore its institutional role as a responsible countervailing force in our system of checks and balances. The trajectory of the planned investigations does not, unfortunately, help rebuild the Senate's prestige.

These diversionary moves are apparently intended to cast doubt on the motives of the officials who have raised issues concerning Lacson's activities. Sen. Ramon Revilla has even called into question the motives of the press in publishing the Isafp-PNP report on Lacson. It appears that some senators would right away shoot the messengers bringing bad news rather than face it. The very serious charges brought against Lacson, which are contained in an official report, are the central issue, not whether the report was intended to demolish his presidential prospects in 2004.

With such members in the Senate, its chances of rehabilitation from its degradation are very slim. It's too bad that this once great institution now has many members who cannot see beyond their noses.



OWWA can't collect ₱641-M loan to RII Builders

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

"WE will set up…a provident fund for overseas Filipinos," said President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address.

Ms President, there already is a provident and welfare fund collected and administered by the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) for OFWs. The welfare fees are collected from workers before they leave the Philippines for their jobs overseas. The fund is supposed to be used for medical, dental, burial, transportation and other benefits and for the legal and other fees incurred by the workers. As of 1999, the OWWA had a total fund of P2,419,229,968.

During the term of President Fidel Ramos, the OWWA invested P563 million in the Smokey Mountain Project Participation Certificates (SMPPC) issued by RII Builders of Reghis Romero II (one of those who were kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan, and the first to be released). The certificates were supposed to mature at a value of P641,297,335 last Oct. 12, 1999. However, as of today, only two months shy of one year, not a peso of that amount has been redeemed by RII Builders. According to the Commission on Audit, this resulted in "more losses on the part of the OWWA in terms of opportunity lost."

"Had these certificates been redeemed at the time of maturity," the auditors said, the "OWWA would (have been) able to invest in a higher-yielding investment."

The COA has many other unfavorable findings on the OWWA's finances but we will limit it to the unredeemed P641-million SMPPCs. This amount invested in a dubious undertaking is 28 percent more than the total welfare collections in 1999. The total of five unaccounted items cited by the resident auditor is 94 percent of the total welfare fee collections for 1999.

Clearly, there is something very wrong here, and the Department of Labor and Employment or the Senate should investigate the deal. This is the money of overseas Filipino workers, without whose repatriated earnings we would have more serious balance of payments and foreign exchange problems. They are the intended beneficiaries of this OWWA fund and now the P641 million is beyond their reach. There is now restiveness among OFWs and non-government organizations over the deliberate failure of government to collect this debt.

Ms President, there already is a provident fund for overseas workers but some unscrupulous people are dipping their hands into it.

* * *

Here is good news for a change: The Manila Meteor, a new broadsheet, reports that a mini-forest will rise in a 3.5-hectare portion of the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City. UP, the Quezon City government and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources are cooperating on the project. According to the story, some 1,365 indigenous trees will be planted in the park.

This is refreshing news. Quezon City, in spite of its huge size, the biggest in Metro Manila, has only two parks, the mini-park in the Quezon Memorial Circle (which is fast being transformed into a flea market), and the adjacent Ninoy Aquino Park. Other pocket parks, like the Bernardo Park at the foot of the Kamuning flyover in Edsa, have been neglected and are no longer in use. Even the park and swimming pool inside the Balara Filtration Plant, a favorite excursion spot even for people from the provinces, was closed when the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System was privatized—perhaps a clear example of one of the evils of privatization.

Fortunately, the UP Diliman campus, with its many trees and extensive grass-covered grounds, doubles as a park and lungs for the city. The university has developed the area behind the administration building for the enjoyment of the people. Families play and picnic here during fine weather. On weekends, the oval is closed to vehicular traffic so that exercisers can jog, walk and bike there without any risk from passing vehicles.

* * *

Still looking at the bright side, the best thing to happen, at least to Quezon City commuters, is the Asian economic crisis. UP was about to sign a contract with Ayala to develop its Commonwealth Avenue campus into a giant shopping mall and business center with residential condominiums. This would have made traffic on Commonwealth, already very bad as it is, a terrible nightmare. For this reason, people opposed the development, as well as another harebrained Ayala idea to build another mall and high-rise condominiums on Quezon Memorial Circle itself.

But the previous UP officials were blinded by greed and were bent on pushing the project in spite of the opposition, until God intervened. He caused the Asian economic crisis that washed out the foundations of the real estate development market. Land speculators and developers lost their shirts but the debacle saved one of the last open spaces in Metro Manila. UP president Francisco Nemenzo and the Board of Regents have permanently shelved the idea.

However, the property is still a temptation and magnet to squatters, land speculators, developers, land grabbers and false claimants while it remains idle. While UP still has no use for it, why not convert it into a park with the cooperation of the DENR, the Quezon City government, the Manila Seedling Bank Foundation and environmental NGOs? Anytime the university needs it, it can have it back. In the meantime, let the people enjoy it instead of letting it waste away. City Hall may even grant UP real estate tax incentives in exchange for the use of part of its property.

Good and bad

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I USED to thank our lucky stars we were not a litigious country. Or a people who go to court every time we have a nasty disagreement with the office, with the neighbor or with some unpleasant stranger. That's what people in the West have to live with and constantly complain about. The slightest aggravation becomes a reason to drag someone to court. To the delight, and improvement in fortune, of lawyers, whose tribe keeps increasing despite everyone wishing them not to. Indeed, in some cases, upon the instance of lawyers, who are often little more than ambulance-chasers, people who egg on victims of minor accidents to bring their cases to courts rather than settle for reasonable appeasement.

I used to say that at least here in the Philippines, we tend to be more agreeable. Or at least, we tend to settle things in less acrimonious, indirect and costly ways. We settle out of court. The barangay exists precisely to carry out that function, among other things. It is there to settle petty quarrels, and save the parties involved the trouble of going to court, if indeed they have the means to do so. Often, it is to save the parties from waging never-ending vendettas.

But I don't know now if we have the better end of the deal.

What is bad in the Western case is that it has made lawyers far more ubiquitous and rich, quite apart from making people less neighborly, which is how things are in their big cities. It is a tremendously depersonalized world, one where institutions, chief of them the law, loom as distant, stern and unbending authority. These institutions are impervious to entreaty, they are not stoked to compassion, though now and then they can be coaxed into some form of it by arduous effort. But that the law in particular can be moved by entreaty into showing compassion is the (rare) exception rather than the (absolute) rule.

The image that leaps to mind is that of Javert, the police inspector, hounding Jean Valjean, the escaped convict, to the ends of the earth in Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables." Our sympathies, of course, are with Valjean, his crime in the first place being only to steal a loaf of bread while in the throes of hunger. We are repelled by Javert, who is the picture of stern benignity, though far more stern than benign. He is someone who pursues honor and rectitude to a fault. As a symbol of law, he is of course the extreme. But he is a good image to keep in mind, the symbol of something alien that cannot be appealed to.

The good there is that it allows for a system. You commit a traffic violation and you get a ticket. You may not appeal to the compassion or consideration of the cop, who is the black figure in leather jacket, boots and helmet that you see on your side-view mirror cautiously walking up to you. Sometimes you can appeal to his venality, but that is more the exception than the rule. You steal taxpayers' money and get caught, you face a stern-faced judge who sends you to jail, but not without first giving you to know his personal opinion of the scum that you are. "Before I pass sentence, let me just say…" and he rises to eloquence in his righteous indignation. The law is a stern ruler, but it is not an unwise one. It is a demanding ruler, but it is not a petty one.

The good in our more personalized ways is that we tend to have very good relations with people. I remember again what an Italian-American friend who worked in the Asian Development Bank told me a couple of years ago. He had been to many places, he said, but he could say with profound conviction that the smiles of people here were genuine. Even those of waiters, he said. Of course, there were the obsequious types, that seemed a hazard of the profession. But most others treated you well not for anything else but that they were just naturally friendly. Filipinos, he said, really liked other people.

The bad, well, that unfortunately is legion, and probably outweighs the good. That is why I say I am not so sure we have the better end of the deal. Our strength is also our weakness, and a monumental one at that. The law is not a sternly benign entity, he is the grime-soaked, gas-masked traffic cop at the corner who can be intimidated or bribed or both. Consequently, drivers think nothing of flouting traffic rules, taking the wrong lanes, or even seizing the opposite lanes, because even if they're caught, *puwedeng pag-usapan*.

The law is not a distantly majestic entity, he is Judge So-and-So, who is the friend of the classmate of the cousin of the brother of one's husband or wife, and can be counted upon to look with leniency upon one's case. Or persuaded with the appropriate tokens of appreciation. One thinks nothing of stealing or raping because there is no crime that is beyond recourse, that is beyond the pale of *pakiusap*. There is no case so iron-clad it cannot be melted, there is no case so shut it cannot be opened. *Puwedeng pag-usapan.*

The law is not divinely absolute, it is humanly relative. God is not an Old Testament figure, an unnamable Yahweh, that strikes down the wicked with fire and brimstone even as they cringe from his wrath in fear and repentance. He is the Christ who goes around preaching but is better dressed than Mike Velarde (he does not wear multicolored plaid suits) who is most accessible and forgiving. If you get slapped in one cheek, turn the other cheek, Christ said, which we Filipinos somehow take to mean doing it to the other guy and not practicing it oneself. We think nothing of committing sin, from ordinal to cardinal, because none of it is beyond the pale of forgiveness, none of it is beyond *pakiusap* with Christ, who takes the form of Fr. So-and-So in the confessional. Of course, one improves the *pakiusap* by making *pakikisama* with the Church in the form of giving generous donations.

I don't know that we'll be better off with an Old Testament God or with a Javert. But surely we can do with just a little bit more of them?

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Booby trap for Corpus?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SEN. Panfilo Lacson, stung by the allegation of AFP intelligence chief Victor Corpus that he and deposed President Estrada have between them 18 bank accounts abroad containing about $1billion is now playing a game of brinkmanship. He says he is giving Corpus a power of attorney to "withdraw" the alleged deposits and turn them over to the national treasury, otherwise Corpus should resign and face the courts. Lacson adds that if any money is recovered from those accounts, he is ready to go "straight to jail without a trial." The ball is now in Corpus' hand, and the public is awaiting what he will do in the face of Lacson's challenge and what kind of evidence he will produce.

It looks like a booby trap has been laid for Corpus. If he accepts Lacson's power of attorney and comes up empty, he'll be embarrassed no end. If he doesn't accept the challenge, then it will look like he's scared. Lacson's lawyer, Sigfrid Fortun, is very smart.

* * *

Corpus maintains that the evidence in his possession will be revealed in the proper forum. That "forum" is expected to be the Senate blue ribbon committee to be chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo. But I imagine that this committee will first evaluate the evidence before acting on the case. Corpus should not expect it to do the work for him.

At this point I wonder what kind of evidence Corpus has, considering how difficult it is to get the cooperation of foreign banks, which are the alleged depositories of those accounts. Working for him is Lacson's admission that he once owned a US bank account as well as a house in San Diego, and that his wife had opened a business in the United Sates with some partners. Assuming the accounts are or were existing, cooperating with Corpus would have been suicidal for the foreign banks as it would show that they have participated in massive money laundering. Already the Hong Kong branch of Citibank has said no account in Lacson's name exists. What about "existed in the past"? But there's no word from the other Citibank branches as well as the Bank of America and Wells Fargo Bank.

* * *

One key to the whole case is the cooperation of the US government. There are those who opine that Corpus couldn't have gotten anywhere without its help, and that if it ordered the banks to release the documents, they would. Some people I've talked to point out that Lacson and Rep. Mark Jimenez, who remains a fugitive from US justice, were close during the Erap regime, so that if the US government has the goods on MJ, it's possible it has the goods on Lacson too. They say it's not hard for them to believe that the United States decided to pin Lacson down as it has become deadly afraid he might end up in a higher political post on the strength of the multibillion-dollar drug trade—"narcopolitics," as it is now called. When it comes to drugs, they say, the United States will move against anyone. Recall how they cut down strongman Manuel Noriega, once a close ally because of his drug activities.

* * *

Interestingly, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, who was quoted as saying he believed Corpus' story, urged Lacson to give Corpus the authority to look into his alleged bank accounts in order to get to the truth. The question is, will Lacson be willing to expand the power of attorney he said he is giving to Corpus to "withdraw" the alleged foreign-based funds to cover the investigation of the existence of those accounts? If Lacson will allow the investigation, then there should be no problem.

* * *

I was talking to a banker who's well-versed in foreign banking practices and he said that assuming the bank accounts existed, it is possible that by now there's nothing in them. He noted that the investigation into those accounts has been going on for some time now, and in fact, by his own admission, Lacson was aware of it. He said in his Senate privilege speech that he had written to the US Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the first week of June, after learning that our Department of Justice had asked for an investigation into an intelligence report filed by then PNP intelligence chief Reynaldo Berroya.

* * *

In speculating that the deposits might have been moved elsewhere, the banker pointed out that it's very easy to move funds electronically from bank to bank nowadays. He also stressed that it is very easy to open a bank account in the United States since all one needs is a passport, not a US address.

This banker also noted Lacson's remark about the "amateurish clumsiness" of his detractors in making public the same routing numbers. But he opined that banks abroad indeed resort to using the same routing numbers for big accounts in order to facilitate tracking them from branch to branch. But he also said that having the same routing numbers, Corpus' team could have tabulated them repeatedly and thus the total deposits may be exaggerated.

Some people wonder why a depositor with a lot of questionable funds would invest in banks with solid reputations and supposedly stringent regulations, such as Bank of America and Citibank. But someone threw back the question by asking whether such a depositor would entrust so much money to fly-by-night banks.

* * *

The Senate blue ribbon committee looks like the likely forum for Corpus, but at the moment the organization of the Senate has been stymied. After three weeks, it still has not accomplished much largely because of bickering over committees. A big number of committees, including the critical blue ribbon, remain unfilled, as the opposition is still debating with the majority party whether or not Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar ought to be allowed to chair the agriculture and banks committees. The majority points out that other senators who have held that office before, including Senators Blas Ople and John Osmeña in recent times, had chaired committees.

The other day, Sen. Serge Osmeña raised a ruckus on the floor, which his colleagues initially termed a mere pasingaw. But after hearing him speak for two and a half hours, they realized he was filibustering. Pundits said the reason was Serge's strong aversion (to put it mildly) to Senate President Frank Drilon's leadership. Unfortunately, the work is piling up.

Story of an island

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MINDANAO-BORN journalist Jose Torres Jr., says he first heard of the "Abusayap" from his Muslim friends, who described it as a group of young idealistic Muslims which was "partly a military creation." By the time his stories on the collusion between military officers and the leaders of the bandits came to be taken seriously, Torres writes, "it was too late. The phantom had become a monster that killed, not for freedom nor for religion, but for money."

The sinister ties between the Armed Forces and the shadowy Abu Sayyaf continue to hold strong, it seems. In the epilogue of his book "Into the Mountain: Hostaged by the Abu Sayyaf," Torres writes of a military general who met with the family of one of the hostages from Palawan then traveled to Lamitan, bringing with him a black attaché case. In the provincial hospital, the general met with a colonel and, in full view of the medical personnel, opened the case which contained bundles of P1,000 bills. "When will the fighting end?" a nurse asked the general. "It will end soon," the general smiled, "this afternoon."

Late that afternoon, while an estimated 3,000 government troops surrounded the town and had all exits to the hospital compound covered, soldiers stationed at the back of the hospital were ordered to move out for a "briefing." A group of eight armed civilians and a policeman refused to leave, and engaged the Abu Sayyaf bandits and hostages, who were leaving through the back exit, in a firefight. As a result, at least six hostages were able to escape, and two bandits were wounded. Torres also writes that a hostage often heard Abu Sabaya, the group's spokesperson, talking over a cell phone and asking for details on the military's position and the time troops were expected to attack.

* * *

SUCH detailed information is only one reason for reading "Into the Mountain." As John Nery, who is the book's editor, wrote in his introduction, Torres "went to Basilan to write about a man; he came back with a book about an island."

Torres was originally contracted to write a book on the life of Fr. Rhoel Gallardo, the Claretian missionary who was abducted by the Abu Sayyaf in March last year and killed in the course of a rescue mission in May. But he has ended up writing about Basilan and the Abu Sayyaf from a double viewpoint. He gives us an "insider's" account, recounting the story of the abduction and ordeal of the 50 hostaged teachers and students as told by the survivors. But in reflective passages and profiles he calls "intercessionals," he zooms out and strives to locate the kidnapping and the Abu Sayyaf within the history of Basilan and the social, political, cultural, economic and religious forces contending on the island.

The book reads like a novel, suspenseful and full of personal detail. The Abu Sayyaf members themselves seem filled with contradictions. They can be brutal one moment, dragging a woman who is eight months pregnant by her legs up a rocky mountain slope; then tender and childlike, indulging the child hostages and letting them run freely around their lair.

Father Gallardo's silent and stoic bearing is truly heroic, especially since he was singled out for punishment and brutality. Yet even amid all his suffering, he still found time to marvel at nature's beauty and hope for Basilan's better future.

The other hostages and personalities come out as fully formed and complex characters: the principal who begs his captors to throw him off the mountainside; the husband and wife who refuse to abandon each other; the blind healer and seer who "continues to heal the poor, and still sees red in the palm of their hands."

* * *

I PICKED up the book one evening and I could not put it down, even if I was facing an early morning appointment.

Read it, if only to get an understanding of the forces that drive the horrific events we read about in the papers. Read it, if only to "see" the faces and lives behind the names, and how their ordeal continues to haunt them. Read it, if only to better appreciate the challenges that lie in living an upright and moral life on an island that has seen so much brutality and carnage. Finally, read it to understand the human dimensions of the conflict that underlies the Abu Sayyaf's continuing depredations, and the role the national government and the military continue to play in this conflict.

Frustrated that they got little by way of material reward from their hostages from Tumahubong and Sinangkapan, the Abu Sayyaf upped the ante by venturing to the Malaysian resort of Sipadan and then the upscale Palawan resort of Dos Palmas to snag foreign hostages. In the ensuing global tumult, the men, women and children from the two towns were shunted aside, largely forgotten. "Into the Mountain" is their story, and it is a story that deserves to have been told this well.

* * *

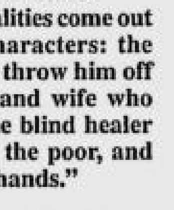
MARYKNOLL/Miriam College is observing its Diamond Jubilee on Sept. 8, Saturday, with a whole-day celebration at its Loyola Heights campus. The affair starts at 9 a.m. with a bazaar of products made by Maryknoll/Miriam alumni, exhibits honoring alumni achievements as well as tracing the evolution of the school uniform and the habits of the Maryknoll nuns, performances and video presentations and sports events. Mass will be celebrated at 12 noon at the College Chapel, followed by the traditional alumni lunch and capped with the jubilee program featuring the host batches led by the College and High School Classes of 1976.

In this regard, Maryknoll College Class of '76 will hold a very important meeting and practice for its homecoming presentation this Saturday, Aug. 11, from 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. at 21 Sampaguita St., Valle Verde 2. For details, contact Minda Garcia Arcilla at 724-9010 or 723-3561.

Women religious to Vatican: No

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



HERE is something I'd like people to read. I need not say a word about it, but I'm tempted. If I have to say anything it is "Yes!" with my two fists raised. I bring this up here because the person concerned, an American Benedictine nun, has visited the Philippines and is quite known to many women religious, both contemplative and active, who earnestly work for a more inclusive, all-embracing church and who faithfully live out their calling.

Statement of Sister Christine Vladimiroff, Prioress, Erie Benedictine Sisters (Pennsylvania).

"For the past three months I have been in deliberations with Vatican officials regarding Sister Joan Chittister's participation in the Women's Ordination Worldwide Conference, June 29 to 33, Dublin Ireland. The Vatican believed her participation to be in opposition to its decree *(Ordinatio Sacerdotalis)* that priestly ordination will never be conferred on women in the Roman Catholic Church and must therefore not be discussed.

"The Vatican ordered me to prohibit Sister Joan from attending the conference where she is a main speaker. I spent many hours discussing the issue with Sister Joan and traveled to Rome to dialogue about it with Vatican officials. I sought the advice of bishops, religious leaders, canonists, other prioresses, and most importantly my religious community, the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. I spent many hours in communal and personal prayer on this matter.

"After much deliberation and prayer, I concluded that I would decline the request of the Vatican. It is out of the Benedictine, or monastic tradition of obedience that I formed my decision. There is a fundamental difference in the understanding of obedience in the monastic tradition and that which is being used by the Vatican to exert power and control and prompt a false sense of unity inspired by fear. Benedictine authority and obedience are achieved through dialogue between a community member and her prioress in a spirit of co-responsibility. The role of the prioress in a Benedictine community is to be a guide in the seeking of God. While lived in community, it is the individual member who does the seeking.

"Sister Joan Chittister, who has lived the monastic life with faith and fidelity for 50 years, must make her own decision based on her sense of Church, her monastic profession and her own personal integrity. I cannot be used by the Vatican to deliver an order of silencing. I do not see her participation in this conference as a 'source of scandal to the faithful' as the Vatican alleges. I think the faithful can be scandalized when honest attempts to discuss questions of import to the church are forbidden.

"I presented my decision to the community and read the letter that I was sending to the Vatican. One hundred twenty seven (127) members of the 128 eligible members of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie freely supported this decision by signing their name to that letter. Sister Joan addressed the Dublin conference with the blessing of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

"My decision should in no way indicate a lack of communion with the Church. I am trying to remain faithful to the role of the 1,500-year-old monastic tradition within the larger Church. We trace our tradition to the early Desert Fathers and Mothers of the 4th century who lived on the margin of society in order to be a prayerful and questioning presence to both Church and society. Benedictine communities of men and women were never intended to be part of the hierarchical or clerical status of the Church, but to stand apart from this structure and offer a different voice. Only if we do this can we live the gift that we are for the Church. Only in this way can we be faithful to the gift that women have within the Church."

Whew.

Two other conference-bound women religious were not as lucky to have a supportive and open-minded congregation. An English Notre Dame nun, after much agonizing, had to withdraw because of Vatican pressure on her congregation. An Indian Protestant theologian, Aruna Gnanadason (whom I had met many years ago when she came here) from the World Council of Churches was likewise unable to attend. The reason given was that the WCC did not want to interfere in the internal affairs of the Catholic Church. But the "unofficial reason was that the Vatican said it would withdraw from commissions involving the WCC if Ms Gnanadason spoke at the conference." Her undelivered speech was circulated.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Mailread Corrigan-Maguire officially opened the conference. An article by Martin Browne in The Tablet said: "Forbidding debate and imposing harsh sanctions on those who disagree is not only unfair, according to Joan Chittister, it is also unwise. She draws parallels with the Church's teaching on contraception, and claims that the lack of debate around the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* meant that people ignored all of it completely, neutering any potential it had to stimulate reflection on issues of life and sexuality. By not being able to discuss it, 'people couldn't own it,' she said."

Take this from Sister Joan, Benedictine nun: "Men who do not take the woman's issue seriously may be priests, but they cannot possibly be disciples. They cannot possibly be 'other Christs.' Not the Christ born of a woman. Not the Christ who commissioned women to preach him. Not the Christ who took faculties from a woman at Cana. Not the Christ who sent women to preach resurrection to apostles who would not believe it then—and do not believe it now."

Gee, I feel good I was educated by the Benedictines who are No. 1 in my book. I feel the rush of 1,500 years as I recall the refrain of the old school hymn, "I am a Benedictine Child" and the pure sound of Gregorian chant that filled the air at eventide and so sweetly devoured my soul.

MadDamn Butterfly

YOUNGBLOOD

i3

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THIS is not your usual story of a wallflower turned into the life of the party. In fact, it is the opposite. This is a story of a liberal turned into modern-day Maria Clara. Or trying very hard to in these times.

After I watched "Mad Love" (starring Chris O'Donnell and Drew Barrymore), I appropriated the butterfly as my own symbol. I chose the butterfly because it is the breathing emblem of change. I was wishing that all the changes in my life would happen in smooth transitions, as gentle as the first time a butterfly spreads its wings to glide to its next stage of existence. But I had to learn my own lessons in life the hard way.

In the exclusive Catholic school for girls where I spent 10 years, everyone wore the same immaculate blue and white uniform. The length of the skirt and the brand of socks were your only ticket to having your own identity. So when I went to the State University, I was in a giddy state because of the f-r-e-e-d-o-m and the absence of walls and heavy iron gates. Its halls were a sea of faceless college students from all walks of life. Ah, the glorious feeling of being in a school where nobody knows who you were. When everyone wore her hair long, straight and shiny, I chopped most of mine. When everyone wore pink or blue, I chose dried blood red.

I wanted to change so that I would be noticed, so I did. I took my being Aquarian so passionately that my inner desires were synchronized to be out of step with the world. My blockmates were often huddled together according to gender. I wanted to be different so I chose to hang out with the boys.

No, I'm not the wild chick making up for the time I spent with nuns. I was a wild Catholic chick with good humane values still very much intact. I kept my spirituality, my value for education and my set of individualistic friends who shared the same sentiments.

But something was definitely changing as I tried different personalities each day. With my brash self-confidence among boys, I soon had my first boyfriend. I was the one who introduced myself. We had an ideal relationship going, but I wanted to test what I could do so I fooled around with one of my close buddies. That was the night I volunteered to pose nude for an assignment in Film 110: Photography. Waiting for the soft light of dawn to grace the gentle curve of my hips led to my first tryst. My boyfriend forgave me but later decided to dump me.

I had the time of my life in college and still breezed through my course and graduated with honors. But something deep in me had definitely been awakened. Doing something I knew society would frown upon gave me a natural high. I had smiled with satisfaction whenever my friends would talk about something I did with shocked expressions.

The workplace was another world where no one knew where I was coming from. This time, though, with my own hard-earned money coming in, I was enjoying a different kind of freedom. I could have all the pleasures I wanted, as long as it was within my means, which was very dangerous. My days were spent in front of the computer while my nights had a lot more color. I couldn't resist the Monday sessions at Streetlife, or Singapore Sling with the guys to start the week right. There are no exams to prepare for or papers to write, so it was okay to stay out late any day of the week with just about anyone I wanted.

It was easy to get hooked up. There was the omnipresent Internet and IRC chatrooms, your colleague's cousin, the friend of the boyfriend of your officemate, or the guy from another floor in your building who happened to bump into you at the cafeteria. I can barely remember the names of all the guys I dated during my first year in the real world. Or maybe I'm trying to forget them. I knew I was fresh bait for those guys, being the wide-eyed and independent girl with my own apartment kind. But I was enjoying my new lifestyle so I didn't bother to question what I was doing.

I thought I was on top of the world and living the dream of the '90s: single and dating around, until someday I would find the man I would like to spend the rest my life with. The pangs of loneliness would sometimes kick in, but there was always someone to fill the space come Saturday night. I led a liberal lifestyle and didn't have a care in the world.

But the people around me did. I would get into heated arguments with my friends who warned me to be more careful with the guys I went out with. My answer? I can take care of myself, thank you. Anyway, whenever I heard about girls being raped, it almost always started with the same premise. The girl is walking alone in the dead of night near some open and grassy field where no one would hear her scream for help. That would never happen to me. Besides the guys I was going around with had degrees from prestigious universities and they were working in respectable companies, so what could possibly go wrong?

Then one quiet night it happened. I was smoking on the balcony after putting in a few hours of overtime work when out of the darkness I could make the figure of one of my officemates huddled in one corner. We exchanged hi's and I asked what he was doing there. Seemingly troubled, he motioned that we go somewhere else so we could talk in private. We decided to seek the silent refuge of the fire exit.

In the whole 17 minutes that we were alone, all the "living on the edge" I was doing hit me smack in the face. He was drunk and he wanted me. There was a lot of running after on the stairs until he was able to pin me down on the door. I fought back, screamed and cried. I was no match for his strength. I begged for mercy until it knocked some sense into his head and he let me go.

I was almost raped by a colleague who I thought to be one of my friends. Everything I believed in was shattered that night. Anything can happen to anyone—it's as simple as that. My education and social standing does not make me invulnerable to rape, robbery or even murder.

As I struggled to get over the trauma, I started stripping myself of the ideas that had been my living mantra the previous year. I was done with dating just about anyone who asked if I was free for the night. I now take extra care to ask a trusted friend to take me home when I go out at night. I have limited my nights out to Fridays and Saturdays only. Most of all, I have started mending my broken relationships by looking inward and dealing with issues that I have to face about my life. I want to start on a clean slate and live a good life. I have yet passed through another fork on the road of my life, and this time I have chosen the path where there's self-respect and responsibility, with a heart full of hope that true love will come my way.

Now, I don't want to be the one who shoots out naughty questions at parties, the girl who's game in every gimmick, the one who comes home in the wee hours of the morning after a drinking session on a Monday night, and most of all, the one who wants to be different and almost got raped for succeeding. I just want to be myself from now on.

And who am I? I am still the independent woman who wants to live life to the fullest, but I know I should do that without hurting anyone or even myself. There's much more to life than just partying and maintaining a black book. I used to love baking, interior design, candles, Zen, writing and traveling. I'm holding out for someone I am good friends with now and whom I'm beginning to see in a new light.

Then there's the nurturing side of me I'd like to bring out so I can take care of the people around me. I am content with the youth I will leave behind because I have learned a great deal from the darkness of my past. I am still in the stage of metamorphosis, slowly rebuilding myself. Soon when I'm strong enough to conquer the world again, I will spread my wings and fly.

i3 is 24 years old and is still in the process of finding herself. She graduated as a Communication Research major from the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE
The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

LETTERS

Where have our virtues gone?

ON MY way home to Marikina, each time I wait for a jeepney ride near the intersection of Katipunan Avenue and Aurora Boulevard, I stand alone at the area designated for loading and unloading passengers. A few meters away, right at the intersection, is where the crowd of commuters are.

Jeepneys wait for passengers at the intersection, often in the middle of the road, blocking traffic and heedless of the honking vehicles building up. (The same situation is replicated on Bayan-Bayanan Avenue in Concepcion, Marikina, in front of the Meralco office and certainly in many other intersections around Metro Manila.) Meanwhile, traffic aides have given up trying to enforce the law and simply turn their backs to this desperate situation caused by plain stupidity and a lack of common sense.

Where have the great Filipino virtues gone? Let's stop extolling them and instead do something about the state of the nation's ignorance, selfishness and bad manners.

Our self-esteem is so low that we sometimes fool ourselves into thinking we are smart. Perhaps, the intelligent Filipinos have all migrated elsewhere, while the Filipinos remaining in the Philippines are those who can't even understand a simple cause and effect situation (such as waiting for a ride at an intersection is a cause of traffic jams).

We take pride in being the only Christian nation in Asia and yet our behavior on the road is extremely selfish and unchristian.

Our tradition of *pakikisama* has become tribal in application. We cease to think beyond the well-being of our families, or perhaps, our stupidity prevents us from realizing that what is good for the community is also good for our families. This narrowness of our tradition of *pakikisama* is most evident, for instance, in the cleanliness of our private homes in contrast to our littered public places.

In this state of ignorance and with our unwillingness to do our share for the good of the community, I cannot imagine how we can move forward even after a hundred Edsas.—**NOEL FORTUNA, Concepcion, Marikina City**

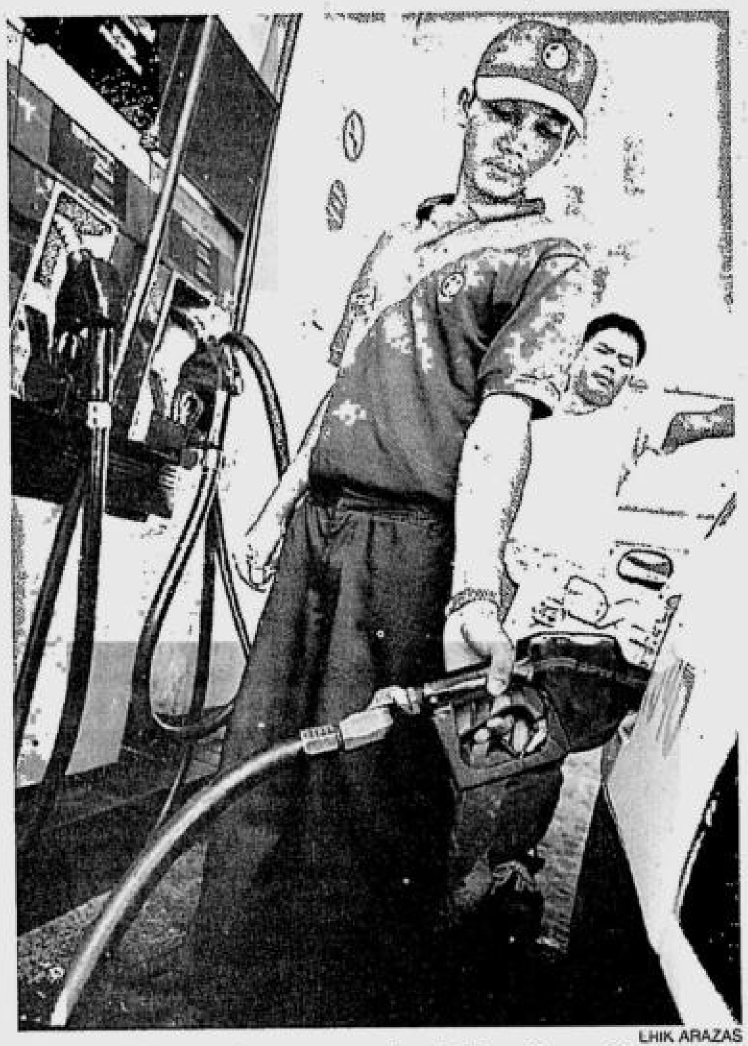
Veterans party a private organization

THE DISQUALIFICATION of the Veterans Federation Party (VFP) by the Commission on Elections as a legitimate party-list organization to represent the veterans sector is a serious blow to the veterans and their sympathizers who seek to get through legislative processes the benefits due them because no funds were appropriated by the government for the purpose. The average estimated accumulated arrearages due to every veteran of World War II, of whom less than one-tenth of the original 400,000 are still living, is about P150,000. About the same amount is due to every surviving spouse. During previous congressional hearings on the resolution of this problem, it was estimated that these claims would amount to about P13 billion. Unless something is done to correct this injustice, most of us will just fade away without receiving from the government what is legally due us.

The party and the Veterans Federation of the Philippines are non-government organizations and therefore do not receive funds from the government. The party is political in character while the federation is non-political.

The disqualification of the VFP will deny the veterans sector representation in the House to work for its members' interests. Will the government allow this injustice to happen to the veterans simply because some interested groups claiming to represent the interest of the same sector are questioning the existence of the party? The party is the creation of the veterans, heirs of veterans and their sympathizers. It is strictly a non-government organization, distinct and separate from the Veterans Federation of the Philippines which was created by virtue of Republic Act 2640.

We, the veterans, are therefore making public our appeal to the Comelec and the Supreme Court to reconsider the disqualification of the Veterans Federation Party in order to give justice to the veterans sector, a marginalized sector that has long been neglected and practically abandoned by the government.—**FRANCISCO C. JOSE SR., Suite 207, Sta. Lucia Bldg., Sta. Lucia Street, Valley I, Sucat, Parañaque City**



LHIK ARAZAS

Gasoline cheaper in Thailand

A FEW weeks ago, a representative of an oil company bragged that petroleum products are cheaper here than in Thailand. When I was in Thailand a few days ago, I jotted down the prices of petroleum products and converted them to their peso equivalent (the value of the Thai baht is 17.1 percent higher than the peso. This is what I found:

	(in baht)	peso equivalent
Shell, Bangkok		
Diesel	13.64	15.97
Unleaded gas	13.79	16.15
Extra gas	14.79	17.32
Caltex, Bangkok		
Diesel	13.64	15.97
Unleaded gas	13.64	15.97
Extra gas	14.64	17.14.
July 27—*PTT, Hadyai City, Thailand*		
Diesel	13.66	16.00
Unleaded gas	13.82	16.18
Extra gas	14.82	17.35
July 30—*Petron, Davao City*		
Diesel	15.10	
Unleaded gas	18.80	
Extra gas	19.32	

Will the three big oil companies please explain?—**ALEXANDER L. PIOQUINTO, 11-B Palosapis St., Nova Tierra Village, Lanang, Davao City**

Culture given exaggerated importance

THIS refers to Jeannie Javelosa's article, "Is the new QC government anti-culture and anti-street kid?" last July 24, 2001.

What prompted Javelosa's question was the closure of the QC Performing Arts and Dance Troupe Studio. We answer the question with another question: "Is the promotion of culture and the welfare of street children the top priority of the government, local or national?" If it is, then Javelosa is right in assailing the closure of the studio. "You kill such programs and you kill the future," she warns. How dreadful.

But is culture so important that scrapping cultural programs like the QC Performing Arts and Dance Troupe Studio will have fatal consequences to Quezon City? We admit, culture is important, but we do not subscribe to the exaggerated importance Javelosa ascribes to it. It must play second-fiddle to more vital, urgent projects of the government.

As to the welfare of street children, we admit it is a top priority, but the city government has other projects to help take care of them. Besides, only a few street children are involved in the studio that has been closed. The bulk of the dance troupe is composed of adolescent, out-of-school youths, many of whom, as Javelosa herself points out, have been transferred to professional dance groups. As to the few other street children, they need not "roam the streets once more, bewildered." There is a House for Street Children in Barangay Holy Spirit which is funded by the Unicef.

Javelosa suspects that the closure of the studio is symptomatic of the "sickness of our country (whereby), with every political change (the new administration) scraps programs identified with its predecessor, for the sake of making a clean break." Javelosa is right in giving Mayor Sonny Belmonte "the benefit of the doubt." That doubt will be completely erased if she knew that the new mayor wrote his predecessor: "Rest assured that the most worthy programs and initiatives of your administration in the areas of poverty alleviation and citywide development will be sustained and complemented..."

Javelosa asks the mayor "to give a good reason why the studio was axed." The term "most worthy programs" is the answer to Javelosa's question. As to her insistence that "Mayor Belmonte must resurrect the program," the mayor has not thrown away the key to open the padlocked studio. Sooner or later, when finances permit, he will "resurrect the program." After all, as Javelosa herself admits, the "Belmontes are art lovers." referring to the late Betty Go-Belmonte and the mayor.—**BEN O. FLORES, The New Capitol Standard, 53 Malvar St., Project 4, Quezon City**

The Inquirer divide

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

MUCH has been said about the digital divide, i.e., the inequities in access to the Internet and other digital technologies. It's a valid concern and should certainly be addressed, but I worry, too, about other aspects of a broader "information divide": the differences in access to information in general, whether digital or your "old-fashioned" publications. Even more alarming is that even as we rave about the wonders of modern information technology, the inequities in access to information seem to be worsening.

I was reminded of this problem recently at the University of the Philippines when we were reminded to use an online service called Ovid, which the university had subscribed to at a cost of something like P4 million. Ovid allows you to scan hundreds of journals, which I think is fine, but the problem is that for most of the articles, you only get a summary.

Ovid does cut down on your search for articles, with the objective of having you go then to a library with hard copies of the journals to get the full article. But we are not in a developed country and more often than not, our libraries don't have the funds to subscribe to the journals. You can write directly to the authors and ask them to send a copy of their article, but there's a delay in getting the article this way, if the author responds at all.

Journals are vital. For those of us teaching in universities, we need the journals to make sure our students learn about the latest developments in the field, many of which are developing rapidly. (To use just one example, look at the developments around cloning and reproductive technologies.)

For professionals, the journals can be life-saving. Health professionals need to know what's the latest. New drugs, for example, are often heavily promoted by drug companies with literature that describe the drug in almost miraculous terms. Without access to journals, health professionals may not be aware of reports of harmful side effects or other problems with these new drugs.

But journals are terribly expensive. Let me give you a sampling of subscription costs. The Lancet, a British medical journal, costs 120 pounds sterling a year. That's P9,600 at current exchange rates, more than half a month's salary for a government physician. And that's one of the less expensive journals. Others run as high as a thousand dollars a year.

I was therefore thrilled to read that six major journal publishers will be coming up with a program to provide medical journals for free or at greatly reduced cost "to the world's poorest countries." It's a major breakthrough that goes beyond the rhetoric about information inequity. The problem here is that I don't know if the Philippines is considered as one of those "poorest countries." I think we're not there (yet) so, I guess it's back to begging authors for a copy of their article.

I did want to write about this information inequity at an even more basic level: access to newspapers. Some time back I wrote about the lack of a reading habit in the Philippines and how this will adversely affect our development. What I've discovered in the last few months is that we may actually be "leapfrogging" the information venues—skipping reading and going straight into television. It is not a welcome development.

I realized this a few months back doing fieldwork in Sorsogon. In the town we were in, with a population of about 30,000, the INQUIRER was the leading daily newspaper, as it is throughout the Philippines. Before we tap ourselves on our backs, let me tell you what the total circulation was in that town: five. Yes, five as in *singko* and *lima*. The next leading broadsheet trailed behind with a circulation of three, tying with some tabloids. And no, they didn't have my favorite tabloid, Pinoy Times.

Yet this town has cable television and young people are able to watch National Geographic and Discovery channels. I think those channels are educational but television is still different from books. It bombards people with fleeting images. There's little time to reflect and to digest the information, as you do with books. I've found in my classes that students "quote" television too often, and tend to remember the more sensationalized trivial information, at the cost of more important facts and figures. The same thing may be happening with current events: if people depend on broadcast media alone, they tend to remember only the latest massacres or payolas, not the government's latest housing project or health advice.

Okay, so I know print media isn't always that accurate either, but precisely because our articles are printed, readers can pause and think. If they have questions, or find inaccuracies, they can write to correct us or present a different perspective. Sure, broadcast media allow discussions but it's different when people are trying to grab the microphone or shout each other down, or when your 10-minute interview is edited down to 30 seconds.

My point is that books and newspapers (including Internet online editions) will continue to be important for bridging the information divide. In that Sorsogon town, there used to be a municipal library but they had to close it down because they didn't have funds for a librarian. They have a national high school with a library but no newspapers because again, there are no funds. I'm certain they're not the only town with such problems.

Two possible solutions here: either the Department of Education, Culture and Sports allocates funds for the high schools to subscribe to newspapers and magazines or the publishers do something similar to what I just described for Western medical journals, which is, offer free or subsidized subscriptions. If I might appeal to publishers' self-interest, these free subscriptions could eventually boost circulation. Once people see how useful the newspapers are and get hooked to reading, they just might begin buying the publications themselves.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

How useful are discounts for senior citizens?

THIS is my reaction to the proposed 25-percent discount for senior citizens. Whoever hatched the idea is kind and caring, but maybe not old enough.

In 1994 armed with my newly issued RA 7432 ID card, I immediately tried to test its impact on certain businesses. I chose a Filipino *turo-turo* inside a mall in Cubao. Before I ordered a meal, I flashed my newly laminated card and asked, "Do you honor this?" The serving lady looked at me from head to foot, shook her head and turned her back.

I was not begging; I was just using the privilege extended to me by RA 7432.

Another eatery in the same mall issued no receipt as if the paid order was gratis. It was only this year that they began issuing receipts. I wondered why, but I asked no questions. I surmised that a powerful or influential but elderly person must have gone through a similar distasteful experience and did something about it.

Buying medicine has also its problems. An attending doctor once told me that at my age I have to live with my arthritis. I had to take my medicine three times a day. But without a doctor's prescription (for a fee), I get no discount from the drugstores.

I hope that our lawmakers will review the law, leave their air-conditioned offices and observe how it is being implemented.

In these difficult times, even a lawmaker would hesitate to share a portion of his salary with an old retiree whose pension amounts to P1,500 a month. I think it is time to increase the monthly pension by a comfortable percentage yearly. If our lawmakers will be generous enough, they will feel the warmth of gratitude of aging pensioners.—**ROSARIO R. LIBERATO, 21 Molave St., Marietta Romeo Village, Sta. Lucia, Pasig City**

Opposition can't rise above politics

WHAT a revolting development! It has only been six months since President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo took over the presidency, and already the opposition is calling her administration a failure.

Did Sen. Edgardo Angara and his allies expect her to work miracles? They must remember that, unlike her predecessors, the incumbent President only has three years, instead of the usual six, to carry out her programs. Instead of helping her, they vow to make things tougher. And who will suffer then? We, the people.

And what about the other opposition, the ones outside the Senate building? Do they really think they can do better? All they do is talk! Why don't Angara and Satur Ocampo help the government for a change?

If our country sinks like an origami boat as Angara predicts, it will not be Ms Macapagal's fault. The fault will lie with those who, like Angara, refuse to rise above petty and partisan politics.—**JOSE MACEDA CRUZ, M. Naval Street, San Roque, Navotas, Metro Manila**

Gordons managed Olongapo well

THIS has reference to the letter of Fr. Robert P. Reyes last July 13 regarding the Gordons' hold on power in Olongapo.

I would like to remind Father Reyes that several attempts were made to change the Gordons but these did not succeed. Has Father Reyes bothered to wonder why?

Those who tried to change the Gordons were either corrupt or had no credibility at all to effectively run Olongapo. The people who ran and trooped to the street as alleged by the good priest are but the very few who are not happy with the way Olongapo is being managed. I would like to invite Father Reyes to visit our City Hall and compare it with other city halls in the country. See how it is being managed.

I would also like to correct Father Reyes' allegations that Subic and Olongapo were the havens of prostitution and child sex during the time Richard Gordon was mayor. Gordon did his best to stop prostitution. He changed the image of Olongapo from "Sin City" to Entertainment Capital of the Philippines. I should know, I was a member of his Peace and Order Council representing the professional sector in 1982.

Father Reyes is not doing justice to the people of Olongapo who are happy with the way the city is being managed. Who is Father Reyes proposing as alternative to the Gordons? Right now there is none.—**DR. MIGUEL F. MALLORCA, dr_mikeph@ yahoo. com**

SSS favors big firms over members

I AM a Social Security System member who, together with all other SSS members, own the SSS funds, and I am outraged at what is happening in the SSS today.

In the first place, the SSS has never catered to what we members really need. Instead it has given us palliatives like paltry salary loans, hard-to-get housing loans, meager pension benefits, etc. The ones who really benefit from our hard-earned SSS contributions are big companies which borrow without paying on time and powerful personalities like former President Estrada who is on trial now for allegedly obtaining hefty commissions from behest SSS loans to crony companies.

All these cannot happen without the connivance and machinations of those who run the SSS, who undoubtedly benefited from the commissions and kickbacks involved in these questionable loans.

Comes now Vitaliano Nañagas II, an experienced and respected professional in the banking and financial circles, whose integrity and expertise are beyond question. As president and CEO, he tried to initiate reforms, cleanse the vicious vipers' tangle that is the SSS and set it on a course more responsive to the needs of its members. The backlash that he got was predictable, understandable and all the more unacceptable and lamentable: the same thing John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and Jose Rizal had to endure.

The Old Boys Club in the SSS, composed of senior, well-entrenched members, whose profitable turf and territory was being threatened, and whose complicity in past behest loans was being exposed by Nañagas, got back at him with a vengeance. They accused him of so-called incompetence, and demanded his resignation so that they could resume their merry graft-ridden ways again. They even got the SSS employees union, ACCESS, to support their ludicrous scheme. It is most noteworthy that these senior staff and ACCESS kept a deafening silence when the SSS made questionable investments during the Estrada administration which resulted in the loss of billions of pesos of our hard-earned SSS contributions.

Let us root out graft and incompetence in the SSS. The spirit of Edsa demands it. The welfare and economic well-being of millions of SSS members require it. And the moral ascendancy of the Macapagal administration needs it. For a change, what is right—not might—should rule. The SSS is a good place to start.—**SAMUEL J. YAP, 2 Verbena, Doña Manuela, Pamplona 3, Las Piñas City**

The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Cops search Suharto homes for Tommy

JAKARTA—Hundreds of police on Wednesday raided another Suharto family home in an intensified hunt for the former dictator's fugitive son, who is accused of ordering the gangland-style murder of a top judge and of plotting a series of bombings.

Some 500 police raided a family residence at the "Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature" theme park on Jakarta's outskirts after a tip-off that Tommy Suharto was hiding there, said city police spokesperson Anton Bachrul Alam.

"We searched the house and the mosque next door but Tommy wasn't there," Alam said.

Nine months after Tommy disappeared to avoid an 18-month jail sentence for a land scam, police Monday accused him of ordering the drive-by shooting of Supreme Court Justice Syaifuddin Kartasasmita—who had passed the jail term.

On Wednesday they raised the reward for information leading to Tommy's arrest from $2,700 to $54,000, a fortune for most people in this country. Jakarta Governor Sutiyoso offered one billion rupiah ($110,000).

Police have also linked Tommy Suharto to a series of bomb blasts that have shaken Jakarta in recent months, after discovering a cache of arms and explosives in separate raids on Saturday and Monday on an apartment and house he allegedly used.

"He is suspected of involvement in the blasts because the home-made bombs we found are the same as the bombs used in the blasts," Alam said.

Kartasasmita, one of three judges who sentenced Tommy last year, was gunned down in broad daylight by two pillion passengers on two motorbikes as he drove through north Jakarta on July 26.

According to police, two of the 12 suspects arrested over the killing have said that they were paid $10,800 by Tommy to kill the judge.

Alam said police late Tuesday searched five of the Suhartos' homes and their cars, looking for Tommy or further evidence of his alleged crimes. Nothing was found.

"We looked through the houses of Tutut, Bambang, Sigit, Ari Sigit, and Mr. Suharto himself," he said, referring to Tommy's sister, brothers, nephew and father, who live in a cluster of plush villas in Jakarta's Menteng district.

"Mr. Suharto was sitting reading the papers. He told us to go ahead. The family were very cooperative."

Alam said the reward had swelled after individuals donated money to police.

"Everyone's eager to see Tommy arrested because they consider him dangerous and feel that as long as he's out there he'll keep disturbing the law."

Police helicopters Tuesday scattered wanted posters over parts of Jakarta. They show a photo of Tommy sporting a beard, above the words "Ibrahim alias Tommy Suharto."

The photo is a reproduction of what police say is Tommy's fake photo ID, discovered in a raid Monday night on a house he allegedly rented in south Jakarta.

Jakarta police chief Sofyan Yacub on Monday set a three-day deadline for Tommy to turn himself in, threatening "harsh measures" if he ignored the ultimatum.

New President Megawati Sukarnoputri last week ordered police to find and arrest Tommy, her aide Bambag Kesowo was quoted as saying by Satunet online news.

The Jakarta Post expressed surprise at the speed with which police have determined that Tommy was behind the judge's killing.

"Many people are surprised by how the police officials so easily drew such a sudden and summary conclusion on the Supreme Court justice's murder," it said in an editorial.

The paper called the ultimatum for Tommy's surrender "a farcical attempt to mask their failure to discover where Tommy has been hiding for the last nine months." *AFP*

Lowly betel nut under fire for deadly mudslides

KUANG FU, Taiwan—Betel nuts used to get a bad press in Taiwan because people who chewed them often spat the juice on sidewalks, leaving disgusting blood-red stains.

But now the olive-sized fruit is being blamed for far worse. Betel nut trees are said to be a reason for the mudslides and flash floods that killed nearly 100 people last week.

Many of the areas hit hardest by typhoon "Toraji" had one thing in common: mountains planted with rows of tall, graceful palm trees bearing tufts of betel nuts.

The olive-sized, green fruit, Taiwan's No. 2 cash crop after rice, is also called "Taiwanese chewing gum" and it's great for farmers' wallets. But when earthquakes or typhoons cause the mountains to crumble, the shallow-rooted trees do little to grip the rocks and soil and prevent them from crashing down on homes.

Taiwan learned this lesson in 1999 when a massive earthquake and landslides killed 2,400 people. Groves of betel nut trees slid down mountainsides, and the government began seriously talking about ways to wean farmers off the crop and restore fauna more likely to catch rain and anchor the soil.

But the brown streaks from the latest typhoon-driven mudslides tell Taiwanese that little progress has been made.

The problem was apparent to Vice President Annette Lu, who toured the disaster area and complained about the thriving betel nut industry.

"I urged the people to stop the betel nut culture. It's no good for us," Lu told reporters.

Betel nuts are popular with truck drivers, construction workers and other laborers because they're a mild stimulant, much like tobacco or snuff. Roughly one in 10 Taiwanese is a betel chewer, easily identified by red-stained teeth and lips.

The result is sidewalks disfigured by splotches that are hard to remove.

The betel nut tastes of licorice and cheap toothpaste. It's popular elsewhere in Asia, and many Taiwanese regard it as a cultural symbol.

Women, often scantily clad to catch the eye of motorists, sell it at roadside stalls for about $1.50 for a box of five. *AP*

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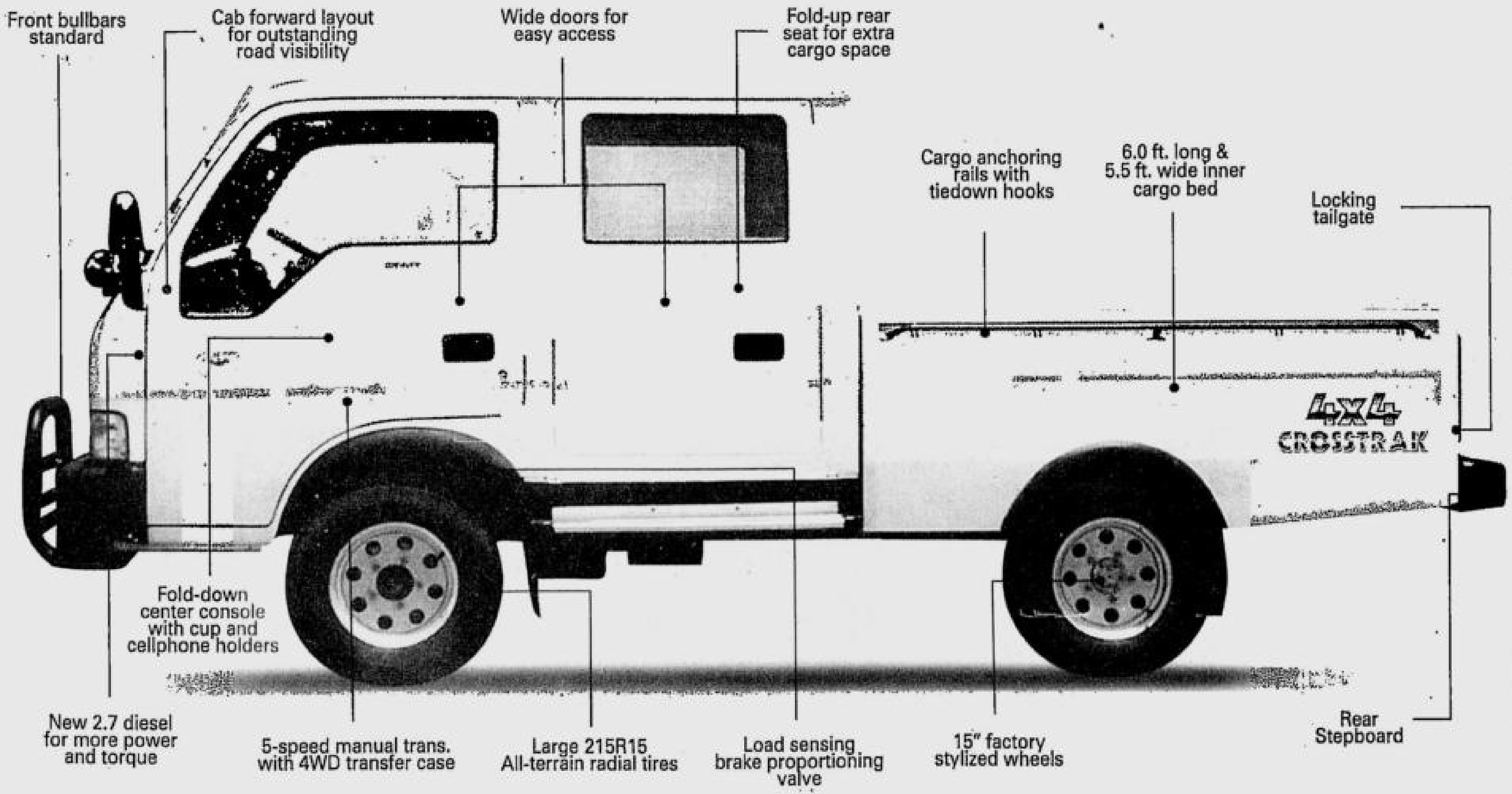
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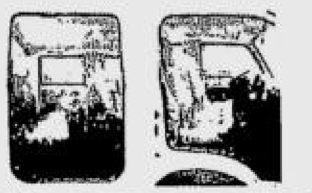

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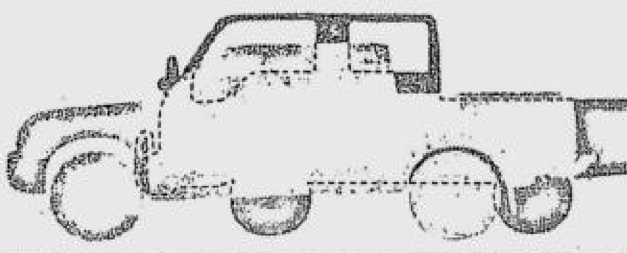

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Cab width (mm)	1750	1690	1820
Cab height (mm)	2010	1640	1720
Cargo bed length (mm/ft)	1828/6.0	1400/4.6	1400/4.6
Cargo bed width (mm/ft)	1676/5.5	1500/4.9	1500/4.9
Gross Vehicle Weight (kgs)	2930	2570	2760
Engine displacement (cc)	2665	2664	3153
DRIVE TRAIN	4 x 4	4 x 2	4 x 4
STANDARD EQUIPMENT			
Aircon/Stereo	✓	✓	✓
Fold-up Rear Seat	✓	—	—
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WORLD BRIEFS

Taliban hangs 4 men

KABUL—A rare public execution was carried out before dawn on Wednesday by the ruling Taliban, who hanged four men in Kabul's town square. The men, who were said to be members of the anti-Taliban opposition, were found guilty of carrying out several deadly bombings last year. While hundreds of opposition soldiers are in Taliban jails, Wednesday's execution was only the second time the religious militia has executed opposition supporters. Before 1999 public punishments in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan were an almost weekly occurrence. But now they have become a rarity. Wednesday's execution was the second in Kabul since 1999. Horns blared and cyclists careened through crowds of bearded men straining to see the bodies that were left hanging from steel cranes. Small boys ducked through the arms of bigger men to get a glimpse. *AP*

Foreign aid workers wa

KABUL—While foreign aid workers waited in their white cement prison for the findings of a Taliban investigation into charges they preached Christianity in this deeply Muslim nation, diplomats and the United Nations Wednesday sought their release. According to the Taliban-run Bakhtar News Agency diplomats from the US Embassy in neighboring Pakistan as well as the German and Australian Embassies will be in Kabul on Thursday to press for the release of the foreign aid workers, who have been held since last Sunday. Identified as two Americans, four Germans and two Australians, the workers of Shelter Now International are accused by the Taliban of using their aid organization as a way to propagate Christianity. The Taliban, who espouse a strict brand of Islamic law, have forbidden proselytizing, making it a crime punishable by death. *AP*

Horror of dictatorship

LAGOS, Nigeria—Generals vie for power as a megalomanic dictator spends lavishly and tosses enemies into a pit. The scenes are grimly familiar to Nigerians, two years after the military junta handed over power to elected civilians. In "King Baabu," Nobel Prize-winner Wole Soyinka's first play since returning to his West African homeland, Soyinka is bringing those memories of army atrocities to life—and warning against future ones. The 67-year-old playwright knows who he'd like in the audience: the former leaders of Nigeria's corrupt military regimes, who forced him into exile and thrive unpunished even today. "Those who've raped this country think they're covered in a cloak of immunity. Yes, I'd like them to be touched by this play," Soyinka said at the play's world premiere Monday night in Lagos, the sprawling commercial capital. *AP*

'Big' Minh dead; 86

PASADENA, California—Gen. Duong Van "Big" Minh, who was president of South Vietnam for just a few days before the country fell to Communist invaders in 1975, has died. He was 86. Minh, who used a wheelchair, fell at his home Sunday, his daughter Mai Duong said Tuesday. He died Monday night at Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena. Minh was installed as the South Vietnamese president in April 1975 as the country crumbled under the onslaught from North Vietnam's Communist forces. In a matter of days, Minh's short political reign ended as communist troops overran Saigon and captured the country's leaders. He was arrested and put in detention, but allowed to emigrate to France in 1983. *AP*

Talks focus on missile defense

WASHINGTON—US and Russian defense officials are meeting behind closed doors at the Pentagon to explore the prospects for an agreement on building missile defenses and cutting nuclear forces. The talks, which began Tuesday and were scheduled to end Wednesday, are intended to set the stage for Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's meetings in Moscow next week with Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov. The Pentagon announced Tuesday that Rumsfeld, accompanied by Gen. Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Undersecretary of State John Bolton, will leave Saturday. *AP*

US planes bomb Iraq targets

WASHINGTON—US Air Force planes bombed an air defense site in northern Iraq Tuesday and President George W. Bush pledged to keep Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's military ambitions "in check."

In a brief announcement on Tuesday's attack north of the city of Mosul, the US European Command said US pilots acted in self-defense after Iraq launched surface-to-air missiles and fired anti-aircraft artillery.

Officials said it was not a planned attack in response to the recent near-miss Iraqi attack on a US Air Force U-2 reconnaissance plane.

European Command said the US aircraft, which flew from an air base in south-central Turkey, departed Iraqi airspace safely.

In Baghdad, the official Iraqi News Agency quoted an unidentified military spokesperson as saying Tuesday that "American and British warplanes bombed civil and service installations."

"Our heroic missile units confronted the enemy warplanes, forcing them to leave our skies for Turkey," the spokesperson said.

The Iraqi News Agency reported no casualties.

Vacationing in Texas, Bush defended the missions as a necessary response to Iraqi provocations.

"Saddam Hussein is a menace and we need to keep him in check and we will," Bush told reporters. "He's been a menace forever and he needs to open his country for inspection so we can see whether he is making weapons of mass destruction."

Bush said he had been briefed on the US retaliation. "Our military can make decisions as they see fit to protect our pilots, unless of course it's close to Baghdad, in which case it requires my approval. The missions that took place were fully in accordance with established allied war plans."

Tuesday's incident was the latest in a long-running series of attacks and counterattacks in northern and southern Iraq, where US and British aircraft enforce "no fly" zones established shortly after the 1991 Gulf War.

Iraq considers the "no fly" zones to be illegal and has mounted a sustained effort to shoot down a US or British plane.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Friday that Iraq had rebuilt its air defenses since US and British warplanes attacked radar and communications targets around Baghdad on Feb. 16. *AP*

AP

'CLONED' HAND

Yu Changming displays his "cloned" hand (left), at his "human cloning" store in Beijing. Yu offers a service making identical molds of human body parts at the store, which opened two weeks before three scientists announced a project to clone human beings, at the US National Academy of Sciences in Washington on Tuesday. Prices at the store range from 230 Yuan (US$27.84) for a hand, to 2,500 Yuan (US$302.66) for a full body.

Palestinian bomber dies in attack

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian suicide bomber in a car blew himself up at an Israeli army checkpoint in the West Bank on Wednesday, lightly injuring an Israeli soldier, the military said.

The bomber stopped at a checkpoint in a remote part of the Jordan Valley, and when a soldier approached, the attacker activated the bomb, the army said.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, Israeli Army helicopters pounded Palestinian security targets in the town of Salfit, damaging buildings but causing no casualties.

The army said the missile strike on the offices of two Palestinian security units, Force 17 and military intelligence, was in response to the killing of an Israeli settler by Palestinian gunmen on Tuesday night.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, a group loosely linked to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, issued a statement claiming responsibility for the killing of the settler, Zohar Shurgi, 40, "to take revenge for the killing of our people and our heroes."

Shurgi was driving on a main road across the West Bank, near the city of Nablus, when he was shot dead from a passing car, the Army said.

Wednesday's violence followed the deaths Tuesday of an Arab Israeli in the West Bank and a Jewish businessman in neighboring Jordan, both under circumstances that remained unclear.

Wael Ghanem, an Israeli Arab, was shot and killed as he drove toward the Jewish settlement of Tzofin in the West Bank, not far from where an Israeli woman was killed Sunday.

Palestinian security sources said Ghanem was a collaborator with Israeli security during the first Palestinian uprising, from 1987-93. He moved to Israel and received citizenship, they said, suggesting he might have been killed because of his background.

However, he was driving a car with yellow Israeli license plates on a West Bank road where a similar shooting attack had taken place, raising the possibility that Palestinian gunmen thought they were targeting an Israeli settler.

More than 30 settlers have been killed in Palestinian ambushes and drive-by shootings since violence erupted last September. *AP*

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In Argentina, unemployed pray to San Cayetano

BUENOS AIRES—A month after losing her job, Lidia Landaneta joined tens of thousands of unemployed Argentines in a pilgrimage Tuesday to petition San Cayetano, the patron saint of work.

"I've come to ask for a job for me and my son," said Landaneta, 50, a laid-off office assistant. She waved a wheat sheaf, symbolizing bread and work, while waiting to pay homage to the Roman Catholic saint many here turn to in hard times. "I have come to ask that he help us survive."

Argentina is in the grip of a three-year recession, fighting to avoid a debt default or devaluation, and the economic crisis shows few signs of easing. The national unemployment rate is 16.4 percent, with one of every three Argentines living on the edge of poverty. Hundreds line up daily at factories and businesses for the few advertised jobs.

Thousands waited in lines that stretched up to 35 city blocks to take part in the annual pilgrimage. Church officials estimated nearly a million people would file through San Cayetano Church during services Tuesday, the saint's feast day.

Hundreds of other unemployed workers threw up road blockades across the country for the second time in as many weeks to protest a government austerity plan aimed at helping ease the country's economic crisis.

Demonstrators were planning to keep up the protests through Thursday in an effort to persuade President Fernando De la Rua's government to reverse plans to cut salaries and pensions of public workers by 13 percent.

"The situation in the country is just awful," said Rene Cejas, a 52-year-old factor worker who was recently laid off and made the trip to touch the statue honoring the 16th-century Italian priest who gave his family fortune to the poor.

"Coming here has helped me in the past. I've asked for help and that help has arrived," he said, adding that he hoped San Cayetano would help him and his two children find jobs.

Upon seeing the statue of San Cayetano, cradling the baby Jesus and surrounded by yellow flowers, many fell to their knees, clutching bouquets of flowers or rosaries.

For weeks, the unemployed have been camping out around the modest church in suburban Buenos Aires. Many traveled from the poorer cities in the Argentine countryside, waiting for days for a solitary moment with the saint.

"I just want to touch him, if even for an instant," said Clide Ourharriet, a 65-year-old retiree clutching flowers. *AP*

Special court OKd to try Khmer chiefs

PHNOM PENH—Another hurdle was cleared Tuesday in the effort to punish some of the 20th century's worst human rights violators, as Cambodia's Constitutional Council approved legislation to establish a special court to try former Khmer Rouge leaders for crimes against humanity.

The legislation establishes the framework for a United Nations-assisted tribunal in Cambodia to try surviving Khmer Rouge leaders, blamed for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people during their late 1970s rule.

In February, the Constitutional Council had ruled that an article of the original draft law was unconstitutional because it contained a reference to the death penalty, which is banned by Cambodia's constitution. The government then altered the article and the revision was recently approved by both houses of Parliament.

King Norodom Sihanouk must sign the legislation for it to come into force, and has previously indicated to UN and US officials that he would do so. *AP*

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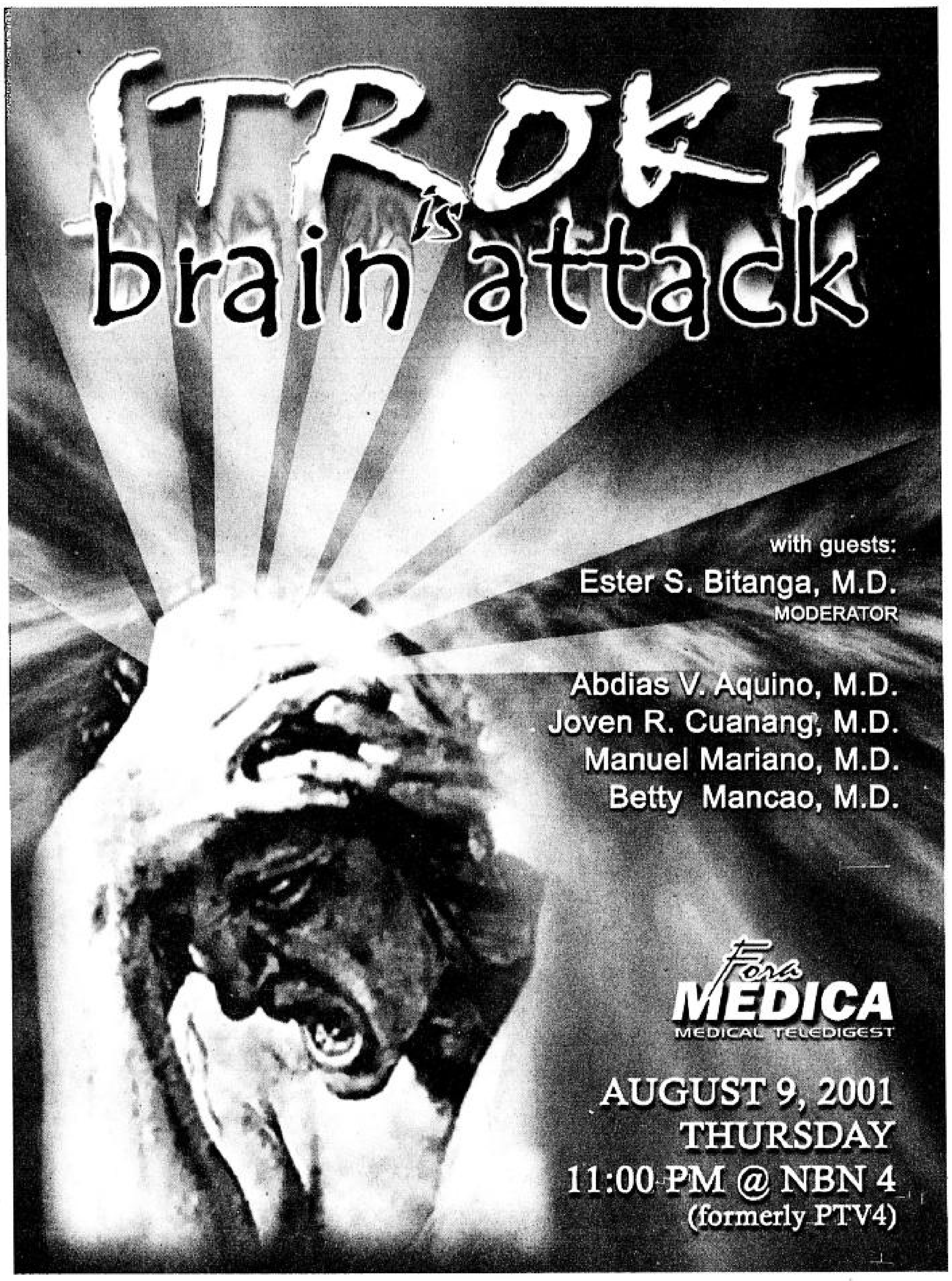

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over Bicol region, Eastern Visayas and Eastern Mindanao. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 22° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Laoag	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Calapan	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Bacolod	Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/08/09/01

ROUNDUP

'Hot meat' intercepted

OLONGAPO CITY—Police intercepted on Sunday some 350 kilos of "hot meat" for delivery from Dinalupihan, Bataan, to here. Acting on an informant's tip, police waited for the meat, consisting of beef and carabeef, to be loaded in a jeepney in Dinalupihan, trailed the vehicle and moved in as soon as it crossed the Bataan-Olongapo boundary in Barangay Cabalan here. The city government bans the entry and sale of meat from animals slaughtered outside Olongapo. *Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Bureau*

Free kindergarten bill

CAUAYAN CITY—An Isabela congressman filed a bill that will mandate public elementary schools to offer free kindergarten courses to pre-school children in the country. Rep. Faustino Dy III said House Bill No. 45 will give children of poor families, especially those in rural areas, a chance to receive early education. The bill requires the education department to formulate a better, more efficient and more accessible kindergarten curriculum. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Burned imported rice

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Some 50,000 sacks of imported rice from Vietnam and Thailand worth P20 million were burned or damaged when a fire hit a National Food Authority warehouse in Barangay Gusa here. Mariano Lagura Jr., NFA regional operations director, said the NFA warehouse contained 127,000 sacks of rice to be distributed to NFA grains retailers in Northern Mindanao and the Caraga region. But Lagura said the incident should not cause alarm "since we still have (an) ample supply left for distribution." *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NPA rebels kill cop

DAVAO CITY—Three suspected New People's Army rebels shot and killed a police officer in Barangay Apocon, Tagum City on Sunday. PO3 Danilo Algabre, assigned at the Tagum City Police Office, died of multiple gunshot wounds. Police said Algabre was on his way home on a motorcycle when three motorcycle-riding men fired at him. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

1st marine culture park

DAVAO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo will lead the launching of the country's first marine culture park in Kaputian, Island Garden City of Samal on Friday. Gil Adora, regional director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in Southern Mindanao, said the project costs P30 million and is expected to give jobs to some 20,000 persons in the Kaputian District. The 224-hectare park can accommodate 4,000 sea cages.
Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Trader held up

KALIBO, AKLAN—Two armed robbers divested a trader of P50,000 in cash and checks on Monday along the national highway in Barangay Mabilo, New Washington town. Police identified the victim as Emily Estanislao Santamaria, a dealer of soft-drinks and beer in Barangay Polo, New Washington. Police said Santamaria was aboard her cargo truck on her way back to New Washington from Kalibo town when, upon reaching Barangay Mabilo, two men holding empty soft-drink bottles, flagged down the vehicle. When the cargo truck stopped, one of the robbers pointed his handgun at Santamaria, who was sitting in front, and declared a holdup.
Odon S. Bandiola, PDI Visayas Bureau

Zero arrest in Bohol

TAGBILARAN CITY—Four police stations in the province are in trouble for inefficiency, which the regional PNP measures by the number of arrests the stations make. The report said police stations in the towns of Carmen, Guindulman, Sevilla, Sierra-Bullones and Sikatuna have not made a single arrest in June and July. The police chiefs of these towns will be relieved from their posts if their stations still fail to make an arrest this month. Supt. Lani-o Nerez, Bohol police chief, has issued a directive for the relief of the town chiefs if they fail to make any arrest in the coming months.
Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Suspected pusher nabbed

KALIBO, Aklan—A suspected drug pusher was arrested on Aug. 4 during a police raid on his residence in Barangay Manoc-Manoc, Boracay Island. Insp. Christopher Prangan, Boracay police chief, identified the suspect as Corsino Pelayo. Seized from Pelayo were six sachets of suspected shabu weighing 1.8 grams, a .38 caliber revolver, two gun holsters, 30 bullets and P660 in cash. Prangan said Pelayo is suspected to be part of a larger group selling banned drugs in the island-resort.
Odon S. Bandiola, PDI Visayas Bureau

VIGILANTE KILLINGS

15 executed in Nueva Ecija

BY ANSELMO ROQUE
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CABANATUAN CITY—Suspected vigilante groups are believed to be behind the summary execution of 15 people in Nueva Ecija in the last two months.

Their victims were reported to be involved in illegal drugs or had close association with drug pushers.

Most of the victims were from Gapan, the first Nueva Ecija town from Bulacan. The town, which is set to hold a plebiscite soon for the ratification of its status as a city, has been tagged by the police as the drop-off point of illegal drugs being distributed in the province.

Gapan has also a big number of drug pushers. Two years ago, a female high school student in the town was reported to have been found selling illegal drugs to her fellow students.

She said the sales from the illegal drugs were her daily allowance.

Nobody can say who the executioners were as they leave no mark when they carry out the executions. But some quarters here have readily tagged them as the vigilantes of Nueva Ecija whose targets are illegal drug pushers and users.

The latest victims of summary executions were a mother and daughter and two men whose bodies were found in irrigation canals in Aliaga town on Friday and Saturday.

The mother was identified as Marcela Reyes, 45, and her daughter as Reggie, 16. The other victims were Rex Tuazon, 18, who was reportedly the boyfriend of Reggie, and Lando Mariano, 43.

The mother and daughter reportedly asked Mariano to drive them to Aliaga, some 45 km from their place in Gapan, reportedly for the daughter to see her boyfriend.

In two weeks, vigilantes reportedly executed 10 people in Gapan. The victims were suspected involved in illegal drugs. Their relatives though, denied that the victims were involved in drugs.

One victim in Gapan, identified as Nemencio Joaquin, was reportedly taken by a group of men who identified themselves as operatives of the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police.

Joaquin was found dead, with several gunshot wounds in his body, a kilometer away from his house.

Also last Friday in Gapan, armed men shot Romeo Germino, a beautician, in his parlor. The men took with them three other persons whose fate remained unknown.

In General Llanera town, a man was found floating in an irrigation canal. He was believed executed elsewhere and his body dumped in that town.

Supt. Anselmo Baluyot, Gapan police chief, said he has no idea on who were carrying out the executions. He said the vigilantes appear to be using night vision goggles and high-powered firearms.

He said the executions have helped scare away suspected drug pushers in the town.

He added, however, that the police are not condoning the executions and investigations are ongoing.

Trade execs push bid for lower medicine costs

LOCAL government units are preparing to join the national government's campaign to bring down the prices of medicine to make them affordable for the poor.

In a statement, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said this was one of the signs that the campaign for cheap medicines is shifting to high gear.

Roxas said "local government units now want to join the initial group of thirty government hospitals" that are currently the main outlets of 'Presyong Tama, Gamot Pampamilya."

The program carries a "specially selected group of high-quality, branded but low-priced medicines imported from India by the DTI's Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC)."

"We have been instructed by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to continue with this parallel importation program, in line with the pledge she made during her State of the Nation Address (Sona) that the government will bring down drug prices," Roxas said.

Roxas recently made a surprise visit to the pharmacy of the Tondo Medical Center on Honorio Lopez Street, in Balut, Tondo, Manila, to get a first-hand look at the progress of "Presyong Tama, Gamot Pampamilya."

Angelita Barros, Tondo Medical Center's chief pharmacist, and resident physician Dr. Alejandro Panda confirmed that the "prices of the eight key medicines in 'Presyong Tama' are drastically lower than the same drug brands produced and sold" in the Philippines.

"We are hoping that the supply of medicines like these that the government buys would increase so we can really help our poor countrymen like those in Tondo. Most of them do not have money to spend on medicines," the statement quoted Dr. Panday as saying.

Roxas showed reporters samples of the low-priced medicines imported from India, pointing out how certain items like the anti-hypertension drug Adalat Retard "are priced anywhere from 100 to 400 percent lower even after adding the shipping and repacking costs and payment of import taxes."

"Knowing this, local government units are already talking with us to bring 'Presyong Tama, Gamot Pampamilya' even to our health centers, particularly those in depressed rural communities," Roxas said.

Reminded by reporters that the program directly competes with multinational drug companies operating in the country, Roxas stressed that "our mandate and mission is to give our people access to cheap but genuine and effective medicines, and we are hoping that they, too, will join this commitment."

A staff member of Roxas said the DTI expects some heat from multinational drug firms in the country, but that the department was prepared for it.

N. Vizcaya jail abuses revealed

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Inmates at the provincial jail here have warned of a possible uprising should provincial officials refuse to investigate abuses allegedly committed by guards, especially against women detainees.

In separate letters sent to the INQUIRER, the inmates, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal, sought the replacement of jail guards whom they accused of maltreating them.

"*Tulungan n'yo po kaming mailabas ang problema namin habang maaga pa, bago magkaroon ng* riot *dito sa loob* (We ask the media to help us voice out our grievances before a riot erupts here)," they said.

They said jail personnel allegedly lived on inmates' subsistence by cutting on their meal allocation, so that their savings went straight to jail officials' pockets.

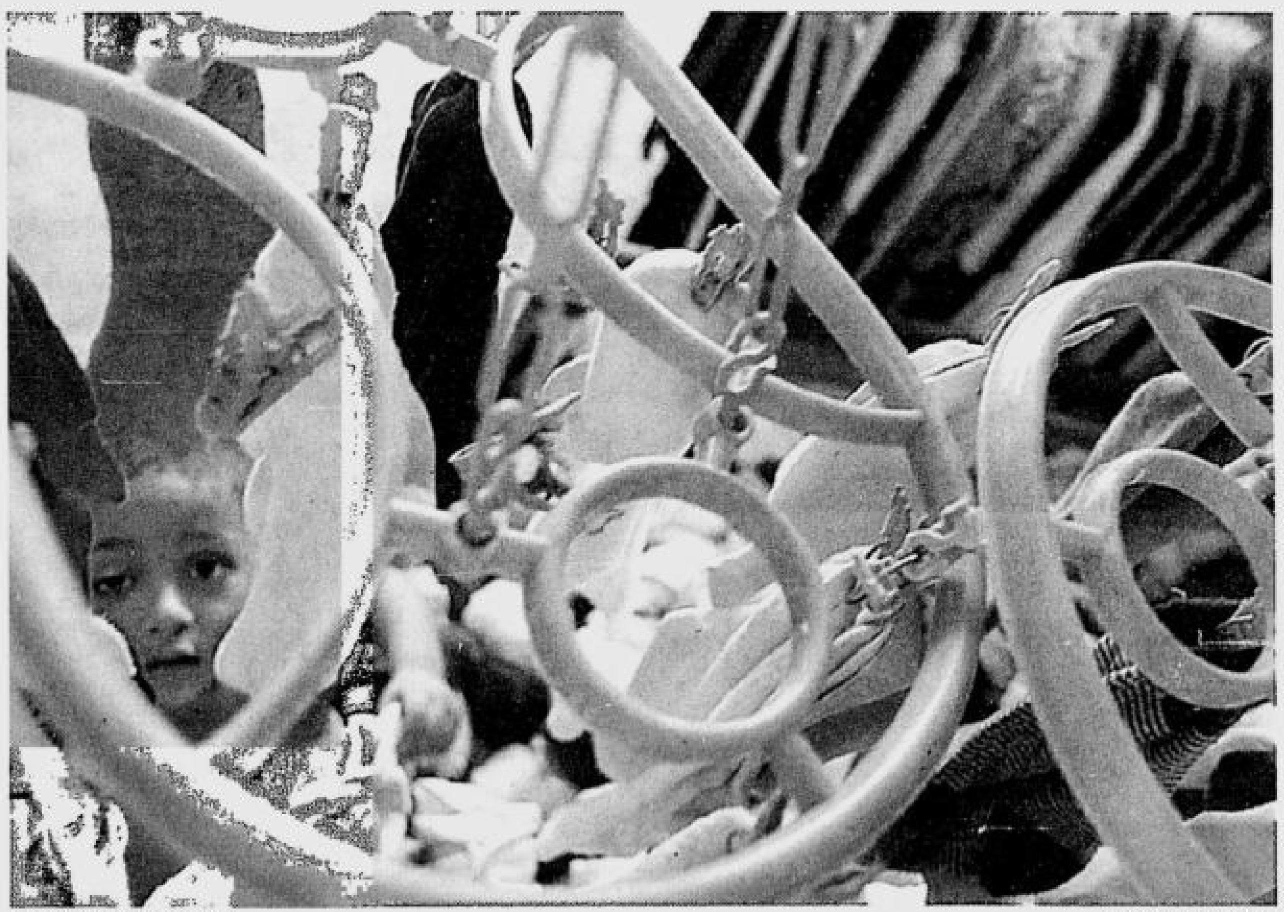
"Some of them are often drunk while on duty (and they) make playthings out of us," they claimed. Visitors who failed to yield to their demands were subjected to severe restrictions, the inmates added.

Acting on the complaints, Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani on Tuesday confronted the jail personnel and warned them of dismissal from service if investigation proves that the complaints are true.

"It was like opening a Pandora's Box," Agbayani told the INQUIRER after a meeting with the detainees.

"An inmate even admitted it was the guards themselves who were selling shabu to them," he said.

Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



'UKAY-UKAY' DENNIS SABANGAN

A child peers through an assortment of used socks that are being sold in used clothes stores in Zamboanga City. Business in these stores, however, is down despite the low prices of the goods they are selling.

PMA grad slain in clash with bandits

COTABATO CITY—An Army officer was killed in a clash with the suspected abductors of a Chinese national in Pikit, North Cotabato, on Monday.

1Lt. Fermore Ocog Jr., 26, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 96, was leading a team of Army troopers in pursuing the kidnappers of Chinese engineer Zhang Zhong Quiang when he was slain Monday noon by Moro Islamic Liberation Front renegades under a Commander Tarog, the military said.

Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said Ogoc's group fired back in a rampage after knowing that their team leader died of multiple gunshot wounds.

A 30-minute gunfight ensued in Barangay Balabuk in Pikit, forcing the enemies to withdraw toward a nearby village in Pagalungan, Maguindanao, Ando said.

Ando said the clash killed three persons and wounded four others. Two of those killed were suspected kidnappers, whose remains were left behind by their retreating comrades.

Wounded were 1Lt. Shahajan Carl de los Santos, PMA Class 98, Sgt. Ananias Sabellaga, and Pfcs Noli Monte Castro and Armand Lucero, all of the 40th Infantry Battalion based in Pikit town.

Ando said Ogoc's men were responding to a report from Barangay Balabuk residents, who claimed to have seen Zhang and his heavily armed captors pass through the village around 11:30 a.m.

Ando said Ocog's parents in Iligan City had already been informed of their son's death.

Brig. Gen. Roy Kyamko, 6th ID chief, said Ocog's death will not stop them from running after the kidnappers and other lawless elements.

"While the police takes charge in filing cases against suspected kidnappers, the military will run after them," Ando quoted Kymako as saying.

Civilians in the area started to leave their homes for fear of being caught in the crossfire.

Zhang, procurement officer of the China Electric Power Technology Import and Export Corp. (Citec), was seized by gunmen in Matalam, North Cotabato, on June 30.

The kidnappers were demanding $4 million in ransom and the presence of a Libyan Embassy official before setting Zhang free.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said his office had raised a P200,000 reward for anyone who can facilitate the safe release or rescue of Zhang, who is now on its 38th day of captivity. *Charlie C. Señase with a report from Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Rats attack rice farms in Pangasinan

LINGAYEN, Pangsinan—Field rats have attacked rice farms in five villages of Aguilar town, 32 km from here, and destroyed about 50 hectares of palay there, reports from the provincial agriculture office said.

Jose Almendares, provincial agriculturist, said farmers noted the rapid increase in rat population after floods struck the town last month.

Floods, he said, destroyed the rodents' habitat, forcing the farm pests to find food in rice farms.

"Palay in the milking stage is very palatable to the rats which multiply very fast and move from field to field at night," Almendares said.

He said if the rat population in Aguilar would not be reduced immediately, the rodents might transfer to nearby towns, especially those submerged during in the last typhoon.

Unlike in other provinces, field rats are not eaten in Pangasinan, and agriculture officials are studying ways to get "economic value" out of the rats.

"Perhaps, we can promote field rats as delicacies like (they are) in other provinces. We are also planning to sponsor a contest among farmers on ways to rid the rice lands of rats," he said.

Almendares also said the provincial government has started distributing rice seeds at subsidized prices to farmers affected by typhoon "Feria."

He said they had distributed 120 cavans of palay seeds to farmers and would distribute 10,000 cavans more in September and October. *Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Be sensitive on kids, AIDS, reporters urged

BY MA. DIOSA LABISTE
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Be sensitive in reporting about victims of child abuse and about persons found positive of either the Human Immuno-deficiency Syndrome or Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

Health practitioners and social workers issued this appeal during a forum on Aug. 3 sponsored by the Kabalaka Reproductive Health Center and its partner Program for Appropriate Technology (PATH).

They reminded reporters anew to withhold the names of victims of child abuse as well as those of persons with HIV/AIDS.

The appeal came at a time when radio stations were reporting about a female high school student who was gang-raped by fellow minors.

At least two radio stations aired the graphic details of the rape.

Another station also dubbed "human interest" news about a short man who allegedly tried to rape a deaf-mute but was stabbed dead by his would-be victim.

"We have to balance the sensitivity of the issue... with freedom of the press," said Aurora Habaña of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Kabalaka's Marian Virgie Gumayan said the solution to media sensationalism is not to run after erring reporters but to dialogue with them.

ARTIFACT SEARCH

Payumo orders looting probe

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Officials of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority ordered an investigation of the reported looting of historical artifacts from sunken vessels in the Subic Bay.

The directive from SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo came immediately after a dive resort operator here and a National Museum official expressed concern over losing cultural and historical resources on the seabed of Subic to looters and development activities.

Jim Robertson, operator of the Subic Bay Aqua Sports Inc., reported that the destruction of some of the bay's famous tourist attractions "cannot be possible without collusion between unidentified perpetrators and the harbor patrol unit of the SBMA."

Earlier, Dr. Eusebio Dizon, head of the underwater archaeological division of the National Museum, said he had noted evidence of looting of shipwrecks while conducting underwater surveys in Subic.

Initial investigation conducted by the SBMA investigation and intelligence office (IIO) showed that fishermen from nearby communities in Subic, Zambales, have stripped a sunken vessel of its propeller and other parts.

The identities of the suspects were withheld pending further investigation and operations to recover the missing propeller.

Payumo ordered the immediate relief of the officer-in-charge of the SBMA harbor patrol unit and formed a task force that will harness the direct participation of surrounding communities in protecting Subic Bay against poaching and illegal fishing.

The Task Force Bay Watch will be headed by the SBMA ecology center.

"The SBMA will not tolerate the destruction of natural resources as well as the historical sights inside the freeport zone. We will impose the full force of the law to punish the perpetrators involved in this looting," Payumo said.

Chief Insp. Robert Quenery, chief of the SBMA-IIO, said the investigation covers SBMA harbor patrol members who were on duty when the incident happened.

Dizon also called on freeport authorities to start working on an inventory and a master plan for both land and underwater archaeological resources in the Subic Bay area.

"Sunken vessels are considered cultural or historical resources that should be preserved," he said.

He said the wealth of potential cultural and historical resources beneath the waters of Subic Bay have largely remained undocumented despite his recommendations to the SBMA since 1993.

"We've been providing them reports *pero* obviously, *hanggang ngayon, hindi pa rin nai*-integrate *sa* program. They don't know what they have, on land and underwater," Dizon said.

In early 1993, Dizon conducted his first underwater survey of Subic Bay—a survey for potential wreck dive sites initiated by Brian Homan and Robertson, operators of the first dive resort here.

He recommended to the SBMA the development of a master plan for underwater archaeological resources and an underwater site museum.

Dizon said there was an urgent need to start at least a detailed research now, saying that "in the future, some wrecks may turn out to be hazardous to vessels or plans."

"Since (the SBMA) has been operating from the point of view of economic development, this will guide them in assessing project proposals," Dizon said.

"We don't even know the inventory of total ship wrecks there, *kasi nakaalis ang mga Kano, hindi man lang nakuha ang* harbor master list," he added.

Dizon said at Cubi Point alone, there could be about nine shipwrecks.

"If we're talking about the whole of Subic Bay, it must be hundreds," he said.

He said Subic, being a natural port, was used as naval base both by the Americans and the Spaniards. ***Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Slain NPA suspect tortured, says doctor

By Joel J. Jabal
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CALAPAN CITY—The body of slain activist Erwin P. Bacarra bore signs of torture and post-death injuries, a fact-finding mission revealed here yesterday.

Dr. Regie Pamugas of the Health Action for Human Rights said a postmortem examination conducted on the remains of Bacarra, 20, revealed that the youth activist was shot at close range in the back as indicated by five bullet wounds.

Pamugas said the victim's genitals have been sliced and his knee and shoulders were broken.

Blisters from the right ear to the feet of the victim showed that his "body was exposed to the elements," he explained.

The Lucena City-based Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) welcomed "any and all investigation" of the reported widespread human rights abuses in Oriental Mindoro in the wake of the Aug. 1 killing of Bacarra.

In fact, we are sending our own inspector general to Mindoro to verify (reports of human rights violations)," said Col. Danilo Fabian, Solcom spokesman.

At the time of his death, Bacarra was secretary general of the Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap-Oriental Mindoro chapter.

Fabian said there was a three-minute gunfight between the rebel group and elements of the 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion.

The soldiers, he said, recovered two hand grenades, two .45-claiber pistols, a handheld radio unit and communist documents.

"They are not plain activists. They are armed components of the communists. In short they are NPAs," stressed Fabian.

Nancy Rada, Karapatan-Mindoro Oriental secretary general, said Bacarra's body was left for about half a day along the shores of Sitio Malawaan.

While Bacarra's body was exposed to sun and water, Rada claimed, the soldiers played billiards.

She said it was only at 5 p.m. of Aug. 1 when the soldiers stuffed the body of Bacarra and Florendo, a suspected member of the New People's Army, into a sack.

Rada quoted witnesses as saying Florendo's hands were tied when the soldiers shot him at close range.

Dani Beltran, secretary general of the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace, who joined the fact-finding mission, said "The body (of Bacarra) was severely desecrated. This is worse than torture."

He called on the Commission on Human Rights to investigate the unit responsible for Bacarra's death.

Solcom elements are also being blamed for the death of Herman de la Cruz, a human rights worker in Laguna, he said.

Perla P. Bacarra, Erwin's mother, said all she wanted was "justice for my son."

Fabian said the Solcom would not hesitate to punish erring soldiers.

"The AFP will not hesitate to apply due sanctions against those who committed lapses in our procedures," said Fabian.

He said the reported investigation to be conducted by the National Bureau of Investigation and the provincial council are "normal procedures."

Vice Gov. Thaddeus Venturanza said the provincial council would conduct its own probe of the reported 51 cases of human rights violations since Solcom troopers arrived in Oriental Mindoro last May.

Iloilo officials fear return of illegal fishing

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Authorities have raised concern over the reported return of illegal fishing in northern Iloilo, a practice that many people here thought had been eradicated.

Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas called on mayors in the northern towns to end illegal fishing in their areas or he would "conclude that the mayors are in connivance" with the illegal fishers.

Sonia Seville, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources regional director, said rampant illegal fishing has been reported recently in Carles town, 147 kilometers north of here. The town is reputed to have the richest fishing ground in the province.

Tupas told a press conference on Monday that destructive methods of fishing have been noticed anew in northern Iloilo although the reported number of cases has "declined a little" since he assumed office on June 30.

Small-scale fishermen in northern Iloilo have also been complaining of diminishing catch because commercial boats, aside from trawls, intrude into municipal waters and wreck fish pens and smaller boats caught in the path of their wide and fast moving nets.

Nets used by illegal fishers have mesh diameters less than the allowed three centimeters.

Tupas said he plans to impound the boats of illegal fishers instead of making them pay fines and confiscating their catch as what authorities do.

In September last year, administrative charges were recommended against several mayors and policemen for their failure to stop illegal fishing in northern Iloilo.

The investigating team formed by the Iloilo provincial board found that these officials and policemen never took any action to eradicate illegal fishing.

The officials included Carles Mayor Felipe Bernal, former mayors Rodolfo Dumayas and Cesar Betita; Vice Mayor Arnold Betita, Councilor Dennis Golingga and six barangay captains.

The policemen were Insp. Raymundo Maninggo, SPO4 Apolonio Bagoy Jr., SPO3 Hernani Saber, SPO3 Fortunato Mahilum, PO3 Samson Bantillo, PO3 Gilbert Sorongon and PO2 Abe Sabando.

The team also recommended an inquiry into the reported unexplained wealth of Senior Insp. Jack Wanky, former Carles police chief. The wealth allegedly came from illegal fishing.

The team had noted that the sale of ammonium nitrate, a fertilizer also used in making dynamites, was brisk in Carles. Blast fishing was rampant even if the police station is near the beach.

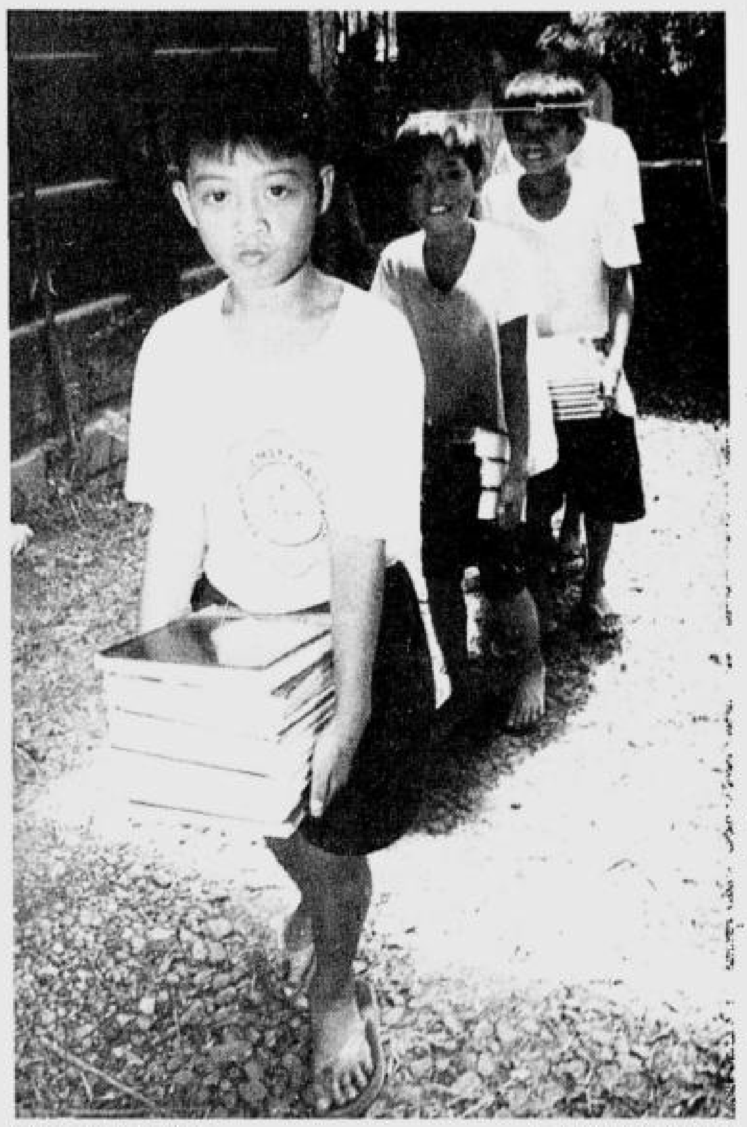
Despite the recommendation, no charges were filed against the elected officials and police officers. Bernal and Betita were reelected mayor and vice mayor.

Seville hopes that illegal fishing will be curbed with the BFAR's donation of 21 fiber-glass hulled pump boats to the province, which will help coastal towns guard their waters from illegal fishers.

But Tupas said these fast crafts would be placed directly under the provincial government instead of allowing the towns to operate them.

He had pulled out two fast crafts from Carles and told Bernal that he needed the speedboats to guard the whole shoreline of the province.

Tupas' predecessor, now Rep. Arthur Defensor, had assigned the two crafts to reinforce the four pump boats owned by the Bantay Dagat of Carles.



TEAMWORK

PHOTO COURTESY OF PGI

Pupils of the Lima Elementary School share the burden of providing textbooks to their school by carrying volumes of imported reference books donated by the Philippine Geothermal Inc. to the school. The firm donated books to 40 school libraries in Laguna and Batangas.

Board demands probe of 'salvage' attempt

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—The provincial board is looking into the shooting of two cousins in Candijay town on Aug. 1 by Army soldiers and militiamen in what appeared to be a failed attempt to summarily execute the victims.

During its regular session on Monday, the provincial board designated the committees on peace and order and on human rights to conduct the investigation.

The committees are tasked to determine, among others, what legislative action will be taken against the soldiers and militiamen involved in the shooting incident.

A group of soldiers and members of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit allegedly shot and wounded cousins Donato Datahan and Ado Jaojao in Barangay Cadapdapan, Candijay, on Aug. 1.

The identities of the suspects and the unit they belong to have yet to be identified.

Datahan, 43, told the INQUIRER that he is determined to file a case against the perpetrators.

Datahan, a janitor at the Office of the Mayor in Candijay town, is still recovering from a lone bullet wound in his right leg at the Gov. Celestino Gallares Memorial Hospital in Tagbilaran.

He recalled that an unidentified man went to his house in the early evening of Aug. 1. The man, who allegedly claimed to be a "rebel," refused to enter the house but instead asked him to go with him, he said.

Datahan said they went to a dark place where a group of 18 to 20 men was waiting for him. An Armalite rifle was then pointed at his left temple while the suspects forced him to walk with them to the house of Jaojao.

The suspects then forced Jaojao to go with them. Datuhan said he and Jaojao were made to walk in the dark.

Datahan said they were repeatedly punched in the abdomen. One of the men aimed his short firearm at Jaojao and pulled the trigger five times but the gun jammed.

Another man, whom he recognized as a Cafgu member, replaced the bullets and fired the gun, grazing Jaojao's left neck.

Sensing that he was next, Datahan said he immediately ran. The suspects reportedly chased him as they fired their guns at him.

Datahan said he was about to jump into a clump of bushes near a ricefield when he felt something hit his right leg.

He said he crawled into the bushes and waited until morning when he was discovered by relatives between 7 to 8 a.m.

He was immediately brought to a hospital in Tagbilaran where his leg was operated on.

Canals planned to prevent Pinatubo lake overflow

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

BOTOLAN, Zambales—Government engineers are building a canal in the crater-lake of Mt. Pinatubo, 40 km northeast of this town, to prevent 210 million cubic meters of water that have accumulated in it from cascading down to 12 villages here this rainy season.

A trench—four meters wide, 5.5 meters tall and 75 meters long—will be built two weeks from now, according to Florante Soriquez, assistant secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Dr. Raymundo Punongbayan, chief of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, said geologists from his agency and Dr. Christopher Newhall of the United States Geological Survey have recommended the plan to "reduce the risks of (a) breakout or overflow" to Botolan villages.

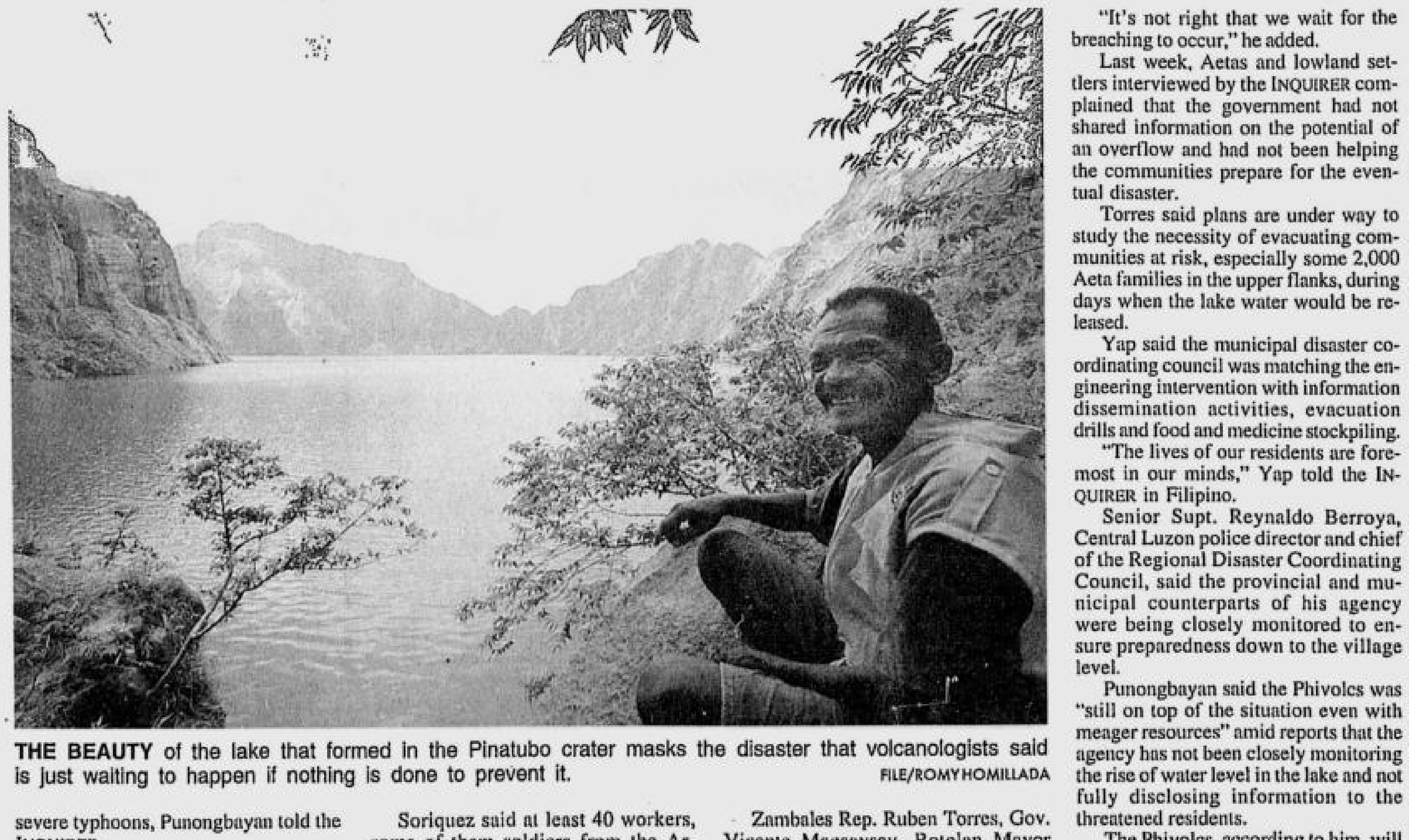
The impending disaster, anticipated since 1998, has become more imminent as the water level rose 4.5 meters below the Maraunot notch, the crater's lowest rim facing Botolan, Punongbayan said.

The water at the lake, which formed in the crater after the June 1991 eruptions, rose an average of 2 meters a month, a study made by Dr. Kelvin Rodolfo showed.

Japanese engineers measured the lake at 10 sq. km. Rodolfo estimated it to be half that size.

The deluge of water and lahar, if it happens at the rate these gushed during a 1993 typhoon event, will swamp Botolan in two hours, Rodolfo's study showed.

Through the artificial trench, at least 15 million cubic meters of water will be released gradually to prevent it from accumulating further especially during severe typhoons, Punongbayan told the INQUIRER.



THE BEAUTY of the lake that formed in the Pinatubo crater masks the disaster that volcanologists said is just waiting to happen if nothing is done to prevent it.

FILE/ROMY HOMILLADA

At that volume and at a slow discharge rate, water will not be expected to move a huge volume of lahar or volcanic debris along the heavily silted Bucao-Balin-Baquero River and into upland villages, especially Villar where the Aetas have returned, he said.

Soriquez said at least 40 workers, some of them soldiers from the Army's 703rd brigade stationed in Zambales, would hurry to beat the one-week deadline for the construction of the canal.

He did not give an estimate on how much this life-saving, emergency engineering intervention would cost the government.

Zambales Rep. Ruben Torres, Gov. Vicente Magsaysay, Botolan Mayor Roger Yap and all barangay captains in the town have approved the plan in a dialogue here Wednesday with retired Maj. Gen. Melchor Rosales, executive officer of the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

Torres said Zambales officials have "overwhelmingly agreed to the plan."

"It's not right that we wait for the breaching to occur," he added.

Last week, Aetas and lowland settlers interviewed by the INQUIRER complained that the government had not shared information on the potential of an overflow and had not been helping the communities prepare for the eventual disaster.

Torres said plans are under way to study the necessity of evacuating communities at risk, especially some 2,000 Aeta families in the upper flanks, during days when the lake water would be released.

Yap said the municipal disaster coordinating council was matching the engineering intervention with information dissemination activities, evacuation drills and food and medicine stockpiling.

"The lives of our residents are foremost in our minds," Yap told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, Central Luzon police director and chief of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council, said the provincial and municipal counterparts of his agency were being closely monitored to ensure preparedness down to the village level.

Punongbayan said the Phivolcs was "still on top of the situation even with meager resources" amid reports that the agency has not been closely monitoring the rise of water level in the lake and not fully disclosing information to the threatened residents.

The Phivolcs, according to him, will monitor the DPWH's construction activity.

Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the Army's Northern Luzon chief, said trucks and helicopters from his command would be mobilized to transport the workers to the crater and to evacuate residents.

Farmers lift barricade at DAR office

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Operations at the Provincial Agrarian Reform Office (Paro) resumed yesterday afternoon after about 1,000 farmers lifted their picket that prevented Paro employees from reporting for work since Tuesday.

The protesters removed their barricade and the padlocks on the gates of Paro in Barangay Dawis after Paro officials promised to fast-track the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program on 25 farms in the province.

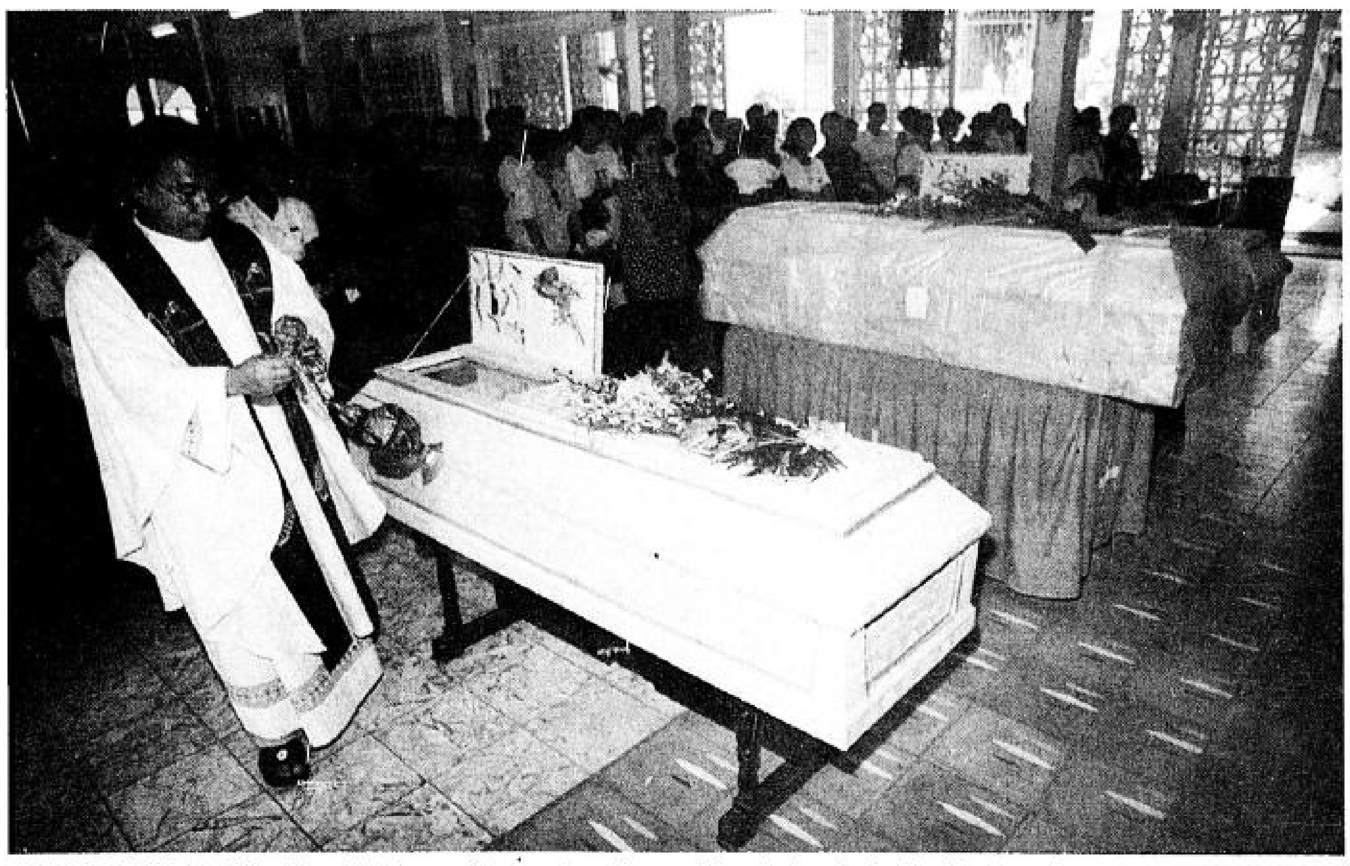
The farms included those owned by business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco and by the heirs of the late Ambassador Roberto Benedicto.

The farmers, belonging to Ugyunan sang mga Mangunguma kag Mamumugon sa Negros (UMMA), started their picket about 8 a.m. on Tuesday to protest the slow implementation of CARP in Negros Occidental. The UMMA is an umbrella of 34 farmer's organizations.

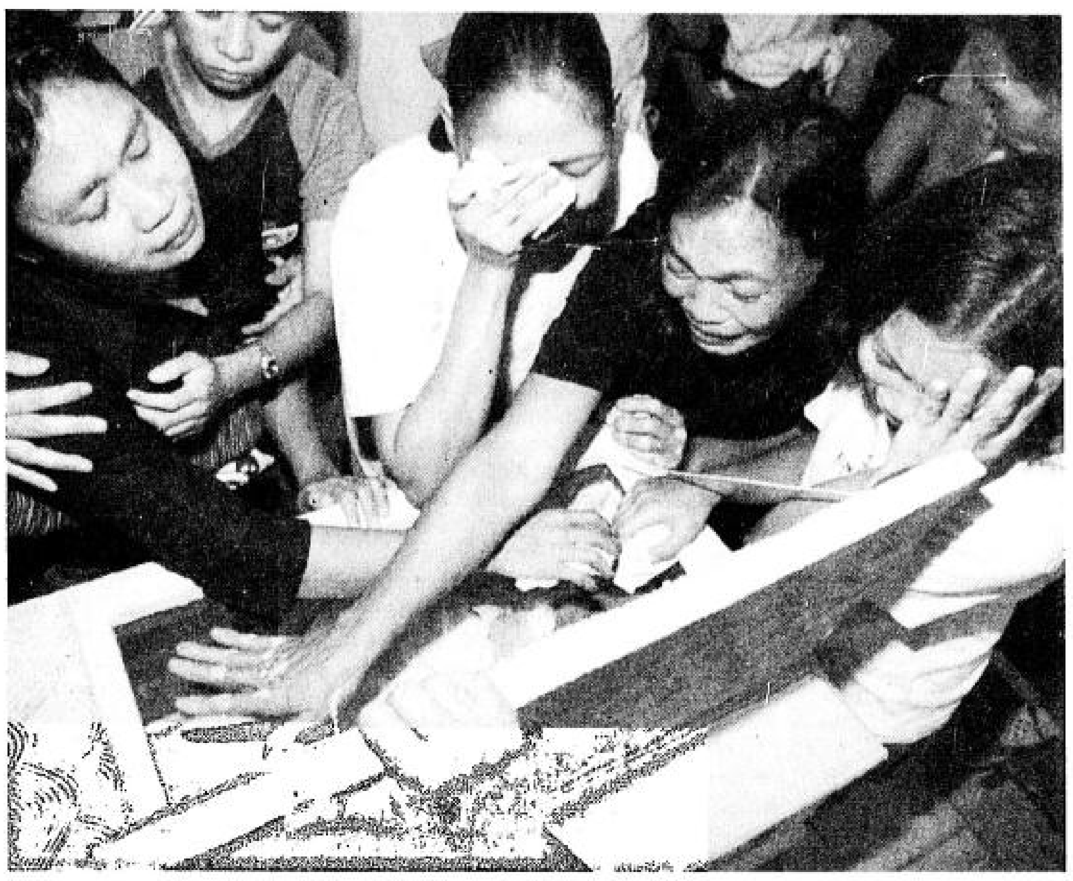
About 110 Paro employees were barred from getting into their office, forcing many of them to proceed to a seminar sponsored by the Department of Agrarian Reform at the Bacolod Pavilion Resort Restaurant.

Yesterday, Paro chief Alexis Arsenal met with the UMMA leaders inside his office. The farmers removed the padlocks on the side gate of the Paro office to enable Arsenal and his staff to get inside their office for the dialogue.

During the dialogue, Arsenal and his staff discussed with the farmers the status of their individual cases and promised to take action on them.



THE ACCUSER, Fr. Cirilo Nacorda, blesses the remains of three victims beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf on Wednesday in Lamitan, Basilan. CHARLIE SACEDA



MOURNING relatives of Elmer Natalaray during funeral rites on Wednesday. CHARLIE SACEDA

GMA woos Malaysian businessmen

(From page A1)

According to Ms Macapagal, the ceasefire will boost growth in the special zone while economic development will guarantee lasting peace in the area.

She promised to get other countries in the region to invest in the growth area and to help rebuild Mindanao.

"Mindanao is an island hungry for development, an island with an enormous desire to move forward. We will make Mindanao a gateway to Southeast Asia through the East Asian Growth Area," Ms Macapagal said.

She pledged to make weekly visits to Mindanao and give more attention to its development.

Ms Macapagal said her government would offer 160,000 hectares of land for the cultivation of palm oil in Mindanao, a move expected to create a million jobs.

Before the forum, she witnessed the signing of 10 business pacts between Filipino and Malaysian businessmen.

Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Malaysia's No. 2 leader, urged businessmen from both countries to act fast in reviving the growth area "to strategically reposition ourselves in light of globalization challenges."

Abdullah said the area was losing out as a low-cost producer to other new locations with large market access to foreign investment.

Security risks

But business leaders, including those of the influential Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Malaysia's information technology industry, queried Ms Macapagal closely on the threat posed by the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers.

The ceasefire agreement with the MILF leaves just the Abu Sayyaf as the only armed Moro group still challenging Manila. Ms Macapagal has refused to negotiate with the bandit group, which holds dozens of hostages, including at least two Americans, in Basilan.

"The problem is on its way to the final solution . . . It is only a matter of time before we finally rescue the rest of the hostages and finally rout this barbaric horde. This is not a promise, this is a commitment," she said.

"We must bite the bullet once and for all, neutralize the enemies once and for all so that we can have peace and order on a sustained basis."

Ms Macapagal said her "historic" visit to Malaysia, the first by a Philippine leader since 1993, was made memorable by the signing here of the ceasefire accord as well as the reunification agreement between the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front.

"These accords are not merely instruments of peace. They are monuments of our common struggle against poverty, injustice, ignorance and deceit," She told a press conference.

The Philippines leader thanked Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad for Malaysia's efforts in brokering the peace deal.

"Because of our fervent efforts, somewhere in Mindanao an evacuee will now have the confidence to find a legal home, farms can be plowed once more, a schoolroom can be open and you can hear once again the din of children's voices," she said.

"We will always remember Prime Minister Mahathir as a broker of peace, as a brother who helped close many fissures between Christians and Muslims."

She described the Malaysian leader as "a model of a right blend of pragmatism, vision and most of all the . . . management of human diversity."

Less sanguine

Other officials and analysts, however, were less sanguine about the ceasefire accord, saying there are still formidable hurdles in persuading the MILF to abandon its 23-year secessionist campaign.

The truce is "a start but we can't be very optimistic," prominent Mindanao lawyer and Muslim politician Firdausi Abbas told Philippine television.

He noted the two sides had yet to discuss the "substantive" issues of the conflict, including the MILF bid for a separate Muslim state and standing down its 12,500 guerrilla fighters.

Rebel sources said the MILF negotiators could walk out if Manila insisted on using the Philippine Constitution as the framework for a political settlement, or if MILF forces were denied access to training camps seized by the military in a major offensive last year.

"We are not yet through," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said. "This is only the beginning of our effort to look for a lasting political solution to the problem in Mindanao."

Abbas said the Abu Sayyaf now holds the flag of Filipino Muslim separatism, "whether we like it or not," with the beheading of 10 Christian civilians in Basilan last week.

MNLF, Sabah

On the MNLF threats to protest an Aug. 14 plebiscite scheduled in Mindanao to determine whether voters there wanted to join the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao, Ms Macapagal said it was up to Congress to decide on the date.

"If I have my choice, I would postpone it but that's not my choice. It's Congress' choice," she said.

Ms Macapagal said she also raised with Mahathir Manila's historical claim on Sabah where there are about half a million Filipinos.

She said she and Mahathir agreed to "move forward to a cordial resolution" of the thorny issue that has strained relations between their two countries.

Ms Macapagal said a panel would be formed to tackle this issue through extensive consultations, adding that it would take "a long time" to settle the issue.

Ms Macapagal later visited the world's tallest buildings, the Petronas Twin Towers.

She was also scheduled to have dinner with the Filipino community in Malaysia.

She will return to the Philippines via Davao City early Thursday. *With reports by AP and AFP*

Priest says general conniving with Abu

(From page A1)

family through legal action," he added.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach the other four officers for comment.

Nacorda said "we no longer suspect, we already believe that there was connivance," referring to the alleged involvement of the military in the infamous escape of the Abu Sayyaf bandits who took over the St. Peter's Church and the Don Jose Maria Torres Memorial Hospital a week after seizing a group of tourists in Palawan.

"We have strong and hard evidence. The people will talk and I am collecting sworn statements to prove this," Nacorda added.

According to the priest, around 4 p.m., June 2, soldiers belonging to the 55th Infantry Battalion and Scout Rangers detailed at the back of the hospital were reportedly ordered by an officer to vacate the area despite the pleas of local residents to stay.

Even police forces were pulled out, Nacorda said.

He said he learned from nurses and other hospital staff of the Lamitan Emergency Hospital that "they saw General Dominguez and Colonel Narcise bringing a black attaché case" full of P1,000 bills.

"In fact, Dominguez gave the hospital staff P5,000 for snacks," he added.

Commanding officers were roundly castigated for allowing the kidnappers to escape that night, bringing extra hostages along with them, despite heavy military presence in the area.

The other Lacson: Ex-hubby paid P6.8M

(From page A1)

band of Hancock's widow, the now remarried Rose Porteous.

The former Rose Lacson of Bacolod had married Lang Hancock, one of Australia's wealthiest men, in the 1980s.

Hancock died in the guesthouse of his Perth mansion, Prix D'Amour, on March 27, 1992. He was 82.

The inquest comes in the wake of vigorous efforts over the years by Rinehart, Hancock's only daughter with whom Rose shared half of the Hancock estate, for a full-scale probe into her father's death.

Rinehart will be allowed to pay Teodoro A$125,000 for a plane ticket from the Philippines to Australia, and another similar sum to give evidence relating to his former wife.

Teodoro is likely to fly to Perth to give evidence next Monday, the hearing was told.

Hope's ruling came after counsel for Rinehart, Peter Hayes QC, had argued for the right to pay a key witness to give evidence.

Hayes told the coroner Teodoro would not give evidence unless he was paid, because he would need to pay for years of security in the Philippines if he gave evidence relating to his former wife.

Hope had earlier mentioned the possibility that paying witnesses could constitute contempt of court.

Hayes said that paying witnesses for expenses did not in itself constitute contempt, particularly if it was not done with an intent to pervert the course of justice.

He said that if the payments were for security—not Teodoro's personal gain—and if he would be giving evidence about information he had already provided in a statutory declaration, such a payment would not be in contempt of the court.

Porteous' counsel, Con Heliotis QC, told the coroner he would accept the proposition if he could be assured the money would go only toward security. Hope concurred. *AFP*

Bid to clone man sparks bitter fight

(From page A1)

weeks, but he declined to say where it would take place.

"We hope that in November we will begin to do the nuclear transfer, which in actuality is a transfer of the nucleus of . . . a body cell into the egg of a woman for the purpose of establishing an embryo," he told CNN.

"That embryo will be transferred into the uterus to establish a pregnancy."

According to media reports, the experiments would be conducted on up to 200 women, each of whom would be impregnated with cloned embryos.

Nothing is perfect

Antinori's colleague, Kentucky fertility specialist Panos Zavos, acknowledged that human cloning involved risks. But he said his team would inform potential patients about the chances of birth defects before any cloning procedure is undertaken.

"There is no such thing as total perfection in the business of human reproduction," Zavos told the National Academy.

Brigitte Boisselier, the director of Clonaid, a human cloning company, hinted that such experiments were already under way.

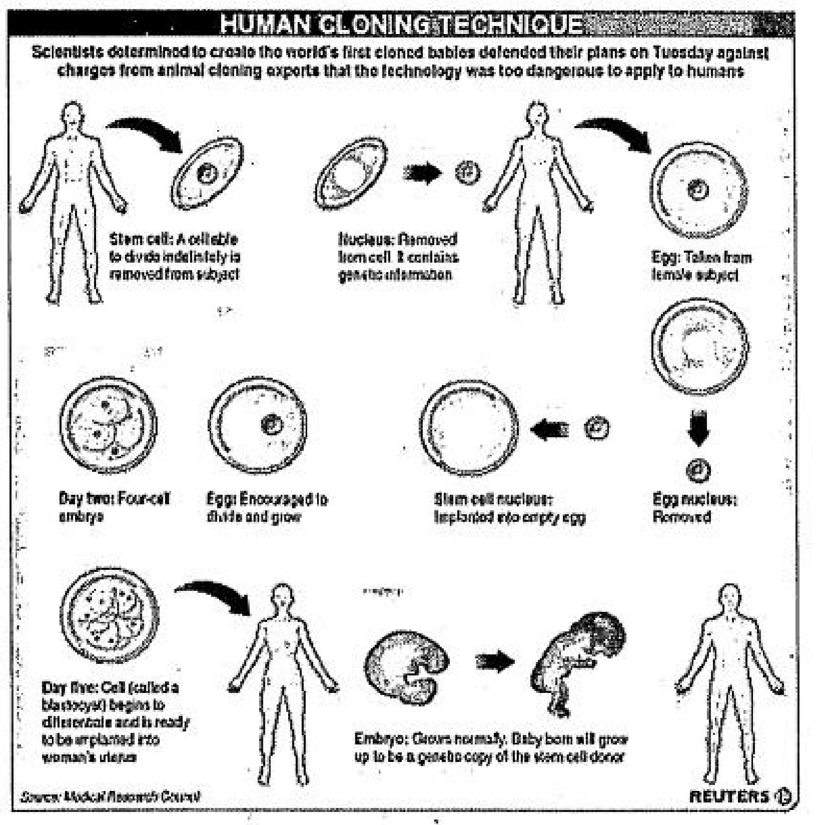
When asked for details, she only smiled and said: "I am doing it and hope I can publish that soon and share it with you."

She said there was enough information to proceed with human cloning.

Clonaid advertises its services on the Web for fees starting at $200,000. It was founded in 1997 by a French race car driver who changed his name to Rael and started the Raelian Movement, which claims that life on Earth was created by extraterrestrial scientists.

'Not good science'

The academy meeting on Tuesday was contentious and was peppered with angry exchanges from people on both sides of the issue. Under the glare of television lights, they shouted at each other.


HUMAN CLONING TECHNIQUE
Scientists determined to create the world's first cloned babies defended their plans on Tuesday against charges from animal cloning experts that the technology was too dangerous to apply to humans
Stem cell: A cell able to divide indefinitely is removed from subject
Nucleus: Removed from cell. It contains genetic information
Egg: Taken from female subject
Day two: Four-cell embryo
Egg: Encouraged to divide and grow
Stem cell nucleus: Implanted into empty egg
Egg nucleus: Removed
Day five: Cell (called a blastocyst) begins to differentiate and is ready to be implanted into woman's uterus
Embryo: Grows normally. Baby born will grow up to be a genetic copy of the stem cell donor
Source: Medical Research Council
REUTERS

The meeting was called to focus on scientific research that may shed light on the safety of human cloning. The academy is a private organization of scientists and engineers.

"This is not good science," said Rudolf Jaenisch, a biologist and animal cloning pioneer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Whitehead Institute.

Jaenisch and Zavos repeatedly interrupted each other, with Zavos at one time protesting, "I'm not going to let him lecture me."

Jaenisch noted that only one to 5 percent of cloned animals survived to birth and some of these later died prematurely due to various birth defects. Others were abnormally overweight.

Problems occurred at similar rates among cloned sheep, cows, mice, pigs and goats, Jaenisch said.

Other experts said that other abnormalities detected in cloned animals included congenital defects, altered muscle structure and changed metabolism.

Some researchers noted that many animal clones were healthy and predicted that cloning would become more efficient.

But they said it would still be unethical to conduct experiments on humans.

The most outspoken critics have warned that in the process of creating a healthy human clone, scientists could create dozens of deformed human specimens.

Even Dolly's creator

Also weighing in against human cloning during Tuesday's meeting was the British researcher who attained international fame by cloning Dolly the sheep.

"Animal cloning is inefficient in all species," said Ian Wilmot, director of the Roslin Institute near Edinburgh, Scotland, where Dolly was cloned five years ago.

"Expect the same outcome in humans as in other species: late abortions, dead children and surviving but abnormal children," Wilmot said.

It took 277 attempts to produce Dolly.

Wilmot disagreed that cloning is a reasonable option for infertile couples, saying that a number of existing techniques are better suited to addressing problems in human reproduction.

Zavos said cloning offers a humane option for couples unable to reproduce using the father's semen and the mother's eggs.

"Infertility is a disease," the Greek-Cypriot scientist said. "Those couples need some sort of assistance to be able to bear children."

Process of human cloning

Cloning involves taking a living organism and making a virtually genetically identical duplicate.

To clone a human, scientists would insert DNA from a person into an egg with its genetic material removed. The egg would be stimulated to divide into an embryo for research or implanting in a woman's uterus.

The offspring would have only the genes from the adult cell. The result would be a genetic duplicate of the cell donor.

Alan Colman, research director of PPL Therapeutics in Scotland, told the panel that cloning in animals is improving and he expects much greater efficiency as techniques get better.

"The bottom line is practice makes perfect. But is it ethical to practice in humans? I think it isn't," he said. *Inquirer wires*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, August 9, 2001
18th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Num 20:1-13**
Gospel: **Mt 16:13-23**

Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples, "What do people say of the Son of Man? Who do they say I am?" They said, "For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "It is well for you, Simon Barjona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

And now I say to you: You are Peter (or *Rock*) and on this rock I will build my Church; and never will the powers of death overcome it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in heaven."

Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

From that day Jesus began to make it clear to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem; he would suffer many things from the Jewish authorities, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. He would be killed and be raised on the third day.

Then Peter took him aside and began to reproach him, "Never, Lord! No, this must never happen to you." But Jesus turned to him and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You would have me stumble. You are their king not as God does, but as people do."

Commentary

Today's reading registers an important event that forms a turning point in the Gospel of Matthew: the confession of Peter. Matthew wrote his gospel for a church in search of its identity, and in the process of consolidation. Matthew points out that this search for identity starts with the confession of Jesus as Messiah. Without this acknowledgment there is no church. The church is carried by the profession of faith of each of its members. Although confession of faith is a turning point in life, it is not yet the perfect adherence to the full mystery of Christ. Like Peter, the members of the church still have to learn many things, but the basis has been laid. To be church means to belong to Jesus.

We thank you Father for having called us to be members of the Church. Grant that we may put into practice what we profess in faith.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (DECEIT; AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Elements of *estafa;* Conspiracy—The elements of *estafa* under Article 315, paragraph 2 (d) of the Revised Penal Code, as amended, are the following: (1) postdating or issuing checks in payment of an obligation contracted at the time the checks were issued; (2) lack or insufficiency or funds to cover said checks; (3) knowledge on the part of the drawer of checks of such lack or insufficiency of funds; and (4) damage capable of pecuniary estimation to the payee thereof. Underlying all these must be the presence of fraud or deceit. The peculiarity of the instant case rests on the fact that the person who issued the checks is not the lawful owner of the checking account from which the checks were drawn. Thus, at the time these checks were issued by accused Gulion, it is a foregone conclusion that the victim Molina would never recover from the checks because the drawee bank would not recognize the signature of Gulion. In other words, the dishonor of the checks will not only be on account of lack or insufficiency of funds but also because the checks are invalid for having been issued by an unauthorized person. Thus, while to an extent we agree with accused-appellant that there was no valid issuance of the said checks, we hold that accused-appellant could still be held liable for *estafa* under Article 315, paragraph 2 (d) of the Revised Penal Code even if he is not the owner of the checking account in question if it is shown that he conspired with accused-at-large by knowingly signing the latter's checks to ensure the victim Molina's inability to encash said checks. Under a theory of conspiracy, it is sufficient that the accused is possessed of guilty knowledge that his co-accused had no funds in the bank when the checks were negotiated. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Gonzaga-Reyes, Third Division, People v. Gulion, G.R. No. 141183, January 18, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

US authorities' probe of Lacson confirmed

(From page A1)

Santoli quoted the sources as saying that "US law enforcement agencies are involved, in cooperation with the Philippine government," in the investigation of Lacson and ex-President Joseph Estrada "based on very real initial evidence of large amounts of money being carried into the US."

In the phone interview, the congressional aide confirmed learning from "very responsible" sources in the US government of an incident involving an attempt to carry a huge sum into the United States from Canada.

Members of a Philippine intelligence team earlier said they started suspecting that Lacson might be involved in money laundering after a Canadian navy patrol caught top aide Michael Ray Aquino trying to cross the Canadian-US border with $1 million in 1999.

Santoli said it was the "obligation" of US law enforcement agencies to investigate, and if evidence warrants, to "prosecute" those suspected of breaking international laws.

Isafp chief Col. Victor Corpus yesterday sent copies of Santoli's statement to media offices. He said Santoli's statement proved that Lacson was indeed maintaining dollar accounts in US banks, as shown by the US agencies' ongoing investigation.

Sought for comment, Lacson said: "The (statement) simply said that there is an investigation. It does not say that there is already a finding. Rohrabacher is not in a position to reveal any finding because he is a congressman and not the one doing the investigation. There is no substance in the (statement). It just says that there is an investigation in response to the request of the Philippine government and in response to the letter I wrote to the US Department of Justice.

"Who's Al Santoli? He and Rohrabacher are good friends of (National Security Adviser Roilo) Golez. They were our guests here before."

Earlier, Lacson had "most vehemently" denied maintaining deposits "in any banks in the world but the Philippines."

At the Manila end, the Office of the Ombudsman yesterday formed a "top-level" task force to look into allegations that Lacson, Estrada and Sen. Luisa Ejercito were holding huge sums in dollar accounts abroad.

"We have created this task force to investigate the veracity of an expose on the alleged salting of millions of dollars from the country," Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito P. Gervacio Jr. said at a press conference yesterday morning.

In Malacañang, Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco said the investigation of the alleged hidden wealth of Lacson et al. was part of a national security operation aimed at uncovering "international crimes."

"We are talking of money laundering here, involving crimes of big magnitude like drug trafficking and kidnapping," Capco said at a press briefing.

He said that the Isafp was undertaking the operation "as part of (its) mandate," and that the Office of the President had "no involvement" in the matter.

Santoli said the US agencies were "maintaining proper due process protocol" and were not discussing details of the investigation.

"Congress cannot and will not press for details at this time, out of respect for US due process law and protocol," he said. "As vice chairman of the House Asia/Pacific subcommittee, Congressman Rohrabacher will request a briefing by the law enforcement agencies on their findings, in accord with US law, after the investigation is completed."

Santoli said the investigation could take "some weeks or months." But he said "Victor Corpus is correct that the US government is seriously investigating this case."

He gave permission for the release of the statement to the media, and provided a phone number in case questions had to be asked.

But Lacson said there was "nothing new" in Santoli's statement.

"I think the (statement) was solicited because the government needs propping up of its story," he said. "There is nothing revealing about (it). I also noted that at the end of the (statement), it says that you may release it to the media. This shows that (it) was issued for propaganda purposes."

Confirmation

Corpus said he expected the US government to file a money-laundering case against Lacson when it had completed its investigation.

"Santoli's statement only confirmed (INQUIRER) reports that US authorities are actively involved and are cooperating in the investigation that we are pursuing, particularly after a joint team was sent to the United States," Corpus said.

He also said he would come out with more "bombshells" against Lacson.

The INQUIRER had earlier reported that Lacson met for 90 minutes with Rohrabacher, Santoli and other US officials on Nov. 30.

Rohrabacher, who is into his seventh congressional term, is a member of the US House committees on international relations and on science. His subcommittee assignments are Asia and the Pacific and international economic policy and trade.

Then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had said that Lacson went to the United States to court support for a possible run for the presidency.

Lacson allegedly presented to the US officials survey results showing that he was more popular than then President Joseph Estrada and Ms Macapagal.

The officials who accompanied Lacson during his US visit were Brig. Gen. Marcelino Malajacan, then senior military assistant to then Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado; Chief Supt. Francisco Zubia Jr., then chief of the Philippine National Police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group; and Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

Lacson later confirmed that he had traveled to the United States. But he said that he was "on official mission" and that the meeting was held to discuss national security programs with their counterparts.

Two-pronged strategy

Gervacio said the formation of the task force was part of a two-pronged strategy of the government's investigation of Lacson's alleged money-laundering activities.

He said the Ombudsman task force would "link up" with government intelligence agencies and zero in on the possible criminal liability of Lacson, Ejercito and Estrada.

At the same time, he said, the Department of Justice would seek assistance from the governments of the United States, Canada and Hong Kong in looking for evidence.

Gervacio said it was Ombudsman Aniano Desierto who had authorized the formation of the task force. He said Desierto had described the accusations against Lacson et al. as "very, very serious."

"As early as Sunday, Ombudsman Desierto called up officials of the Ombudsman Fact-Finding and Investigation Bureau (FFIB) to create a top-level body to investigate the matter," he said.

Desierto could not preside over the press conference yesterday because he had eye surgery on Saturday and was taking a full week's rest on his doctor's advice.

Gervacio said he had a "gut feeling" that the report of the joint intelligence team led by Corpus was backed by solid evidence.

"I don't want to preempt or prejudge the result of the investigation . . . but that gut feeling is shared by many officials in the Ombudsman," he said.

The task force is composed of three officials from the FFIB led by lawyer James Biernes.

It is expected to come up with a final report on the case in a month's time. The result of its investigation will determine whether there is a need for a formal inquiry, or preliminary investigation.

The task force will gather evidence to verify the existence of the alleged dollar accounts of Lacson, Ejercito and Estrada.

A formal inquiry will afford Lacson et al. the chance to submit counter-affidavits.

Their counter-affidavits and evidence gathered by the Ombudsman will be the basis for determining whether there is sufficient evidence to initiate criminal proceedings with the Sandiganbayan.

Gervacio, however, admitted that the task force would be starting from scratch.

"Right now all we have are newspaper clippings and television footage of the alleged money-laundering scheme," he said.

Political color

At the press briefing in Malacañang, Press Undersecretary Capco continually denied that the investigation of Lacson et al. was politically motivated.

"It's unfortunate that the opposition is putting political color into this issue," he said. "Why don't we look at the evidence? I'm sure the evidence will crop up once the Senate starts its investigation of the case."

In response to persistent questions, Capco said that there was no politics in the matter and that the important thing in the investigation was to determine the weight of the evidence.

Capco refused to respond to the question of whether it was true that Lacson's aides, Senior Superintendents Cesar Mancao and Michael Ray Aquino, were in the United States trying to facilitate the withdrawal of the senator's supposed hidden wealth.

But Capco said Mancao should return to the country.

"Maybe he's just afraid of ghosts that he himself created. If I were he, I would return to the country and face the charges," Capco said, adding:

"If my conscience were clear, why would I be afraid to face the court, and why would I be afraid of those whom I jailed? I'm sure that Colonel Mancao has a lot of friends in the PNP who will ensure his safety while he is undergoing trial or investigation."

Micromanagement

In Kuala Lumpur, President Macapagal-Arroyo tried to fight insinuations from the opposition that Malacañang had bankrolled Corpus' efforts to investigate Lacson.

"(Corpus) doesn't have to justify anything to me. There are very many layers of hierarchy between him and me. I cannot go around micro-managing every single bureau director," the President said in a news conference at the Shangri-La Hotel yesterday.

She added: "Colonel Corpus is the head of the (Isafp). He does his work. He does not have to be instructed directly by Malacanang to do his work."

If Corpus has to investigate Lacson, "it's part of his job," she said.

The President would not comment when asked whether she believed that Lacson's supposed dollar deposits really existed.

"I'm the type of person who suspends judgments until investigations are done," she said, adding with a smile:

"You know me, I'm a very scientific person. I don't shoot from the hip." *With reports from Armand Nocum in Manila; Cathy C. Yamsuan in Kuala Lumpur*

Corpus-Lacson battle heats up: It's a trap

(From page A1)

echoed Corpus' challenge, accusing Lacson of bluffing and saying the limited authorization would be useless without a waiver giving investigators broader access to the senator's bank account records and histories.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez offered the services of the Department of Justice in drafting the special power of attorney in Lacson's behalf, thanking the senator "for helping the government uncover the truth regarding the ownership of the alleged bank accounts around the US, Canada and Hong Kong."

But in order to make a government investigation "conclusive," the justice chief challenged Lacson to "similarly issue a written waiver of his rights" under the bank secrecy laws of those three countries, where he allegedly holds accounts totaling more than $211 million.

But Lacson lobbed the dare back, saying he would issue a waiver as long as Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), and other government officials also signed similar papers allowing senators to look into their accounts abroad.

"If that's what they want, let's show everything. I'm not the only government official here," the senator said in an impromptu news conference.

"This is good, we will know who has robbed the government. We will know who has illegal sources of income," he added.

According to Lacson, his special power of attorney (SPA) has the effect of a waiver, authorizing Corpus to "check, audit and receive all pertinent documents or data relative to the alleged accounts."

Corpus: We've verified

"It is as if I am doing the transaction myself. He can't ask for anything more," the former Philippine National Police chief said.

But Corpus said, "Lacson wants me to enter a trap because he knows that the banks will deny the accounts."

Corpus said he would take Lacson up on his offer if the senator, wife Alice, and the Estradas issued in his favor a waiver authorizing him "to track down all their past and present transactions."

Corpus, who last weekend accused the Lacsons and ex-President Joseph Estrada of laundering around $728.5 million, was unfazed by a statement issued by the Citibank regional office in Singapore claiming "a check (of records has) not identified" the accounts.

"We have verified our information and they (the accounts) are there," Corpus said with a confident smile.

ABS-CBN News yesterday reported that Bank of America confirmed on Tuesday that Alice Lacson has an account at its branch in Van Nuys, California. But the account, No. 2430-601-369, is inactive, according to the report.

In a text message sent to the INQUIRER, Lacson said:

"If she had or has a dormant account in Bank of America it doesn't mean that she has millions of dollars. I did not say *naman* that she didn't or doesn't have. What's questionable is if there are millions of dollars in her account."

The account is not one of the 18 on Corpus' list, which was published in the INQUIRER on Sunday.

Lacson said his wife would also grant Corpus special power of attorney to withdraw from her alleged accounts.

Special accounts

But even if Lacson gives him power of attorney, "the banks will not admit (holding his accounts) because it is like signing their death warrants. It will make them accomplices to the crime of money laundering," said Corpus.

Corpus compared Lacson's alleged accounts to the alleged secret Jose Velarde accounts of Estrada.

"Just like Jose Velarde, Lacson's accounts are special bank accounts with special fund managers exclusively handling them," said Corpus.

"They can be denied by the banks but it doesn't mean they don't exist," Corpus added.

He also belittled Lacson's argument that the account numbers were not standard in format and therefore must be false.

"It is the nature of special accounts that clients can ask for special numbers which the banks can generate for them," Corpus said.

He said the difference between Lacson's alleged accounts and the "Jose Velarde" accounts is that "abroad, you have to use your real name."

Why a waiver?

Lacson's "authorization is bound to fail since banks can just deny that he has accounts there," said human rights lawyer Romeo Capulong, who heads a team that has offered to prosecute Lacson for alleged plunder.

Perez said Lacson's authorization "should also include written authority to review and secure all bank transactions, communications and instructions relative to the identified accounts. This will definitely help put the issue to rest."

He stressed that the waiver would allow maximum transparency under the Freedom of Information Act of these countries.

The waiver would enable investigators to trace the paper trail of Lacson's supposed deposits, lawyer Capulong said.

Otherwise, he said, the controversial senator's offer to Corpus to give him power of attorney "has all the appearances of gimmickry."

Without the waiver, Capulong said Philippine and US officials would need to pass through complicated systems entailing such procedures as obtaining court orders to compel banks to open their records.

Lacson should also free bank officials from future liabilities, Capulong said.

But "we're not pushing for a blanket fishing expedition," he added. "In fact, we will clear him if we find no prima facie against him after conducting a deep and comprehensive investigation."

Scolding

In another interview, Senate President Franklin Drilon chided Corpus for asking whether Filipinos want "another criminal in Malacañang" in 2004, the next presidential election.

Drilon asked Corpus to limit his comments to the investigation "without imputing any political motive to somebody else."

Lacson, however, resorted to a political barb as well, saying that if Corpus, an ex-communist rebel, still fails to prove the existence of the alleged accounts, he should go back to the New People's Army.

"If he cannot prove his claims, he should go back to the NPA. He killed a lot of soldiers, ambushed lots of policemen and he says I am criminal," he said. *With a report from Christian V. Esguerra*

Serge O refuses to yield floor

(From page A1)

tering to prevent the majority bloc in the Senate from reorganizing its committees and chairmanships.

Even nature's call he would answer right there on the Senate floor, said Osmeña who had been filibustering for the past two days.

Twice, his filibustering ended with the administration coalition senators questioning the lack of a quorum. Both speeches ended after about three hours. Yesterday's filibuster was cut short by an apparently exasperated Senate President Franklin Drilon who adjourned the session for today amid Osmeña's objections.

Osmeña said he felt that Drilon's action was "improper" because the latter could have at least "listened" to his objections.

He explained that he merely wanted to object to the adjournment of the session for today because he said normally the Senate cannot get a quorum of senators on Thursday.

He said Drilon's action shows how the majority bloc was "stepping on the minority."

Earlier in the day, Osmeña said at a news conference that he had resorted to a filibuster and would continue to do so in defense of the Senate as an institution.

Tyrannical

Osmeña said he was particularly objecting to the majority coalition's bid to grant committee chairmanships to Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar and Senate Majority Floor Leader Loren Legarda.

Villar was nominated to chair the committees on agriculture and banks while Legarda, the accounts committee.

Osmeña contended that Villar can only be nominated to chair a committee without unanimous consent as in the case of Sen. Blas Ople in 1997 when he was allowed to chair the committee on foreign affairs and at the same time served as president pro tempore because all the senators agreed to it.

On the other hand, he said Legarda shouldn't be allowed to chair the accounts committee because her role as majority leader was busy enough.

"It is important that we don't start the habit of changing the rules every time it suits us," Osmeña said. "The majority will always end up tyrannical."

He made it clear he was not objecting to the nomination of Sen. Joker Arroyo to the blue ribbon committee chairmanship but to the way the majority bloc was "railroading" the nominations.

Osmeña said that the majority should allow the individual voting of the committee chairs than to have it in one sweep, which was what happened on Tuesday.

Bitter feud

But Senate insiders believe that Osmeña's objection is a "consequence" of his bitter feud with Drilon.

"It's a bitter, bitter fight and it still continues," said one of the Senate sources.

Another source said that Osmeña and Drilon were formerly close friends, the latter being a godfather to one of the former's children.

They parted ways during the term of Drilon as Senate president last year.

The sources said the feud between the two men started when Osmeña failed to get the chairmanship of the committee on appointments, shortly after Drilon took over as head of the Senate.

Apparently, Osmeña had been promised the chairmanship of the committee, but the position went to then Sen. Raul Roco.

The first source said Osmeña's blocking the Senate committee reorganization was intended to "cross swords with Drilon."

Yesterday's incident showed exactly the "grudge fight" between the two men, the same source said.

At one point of his filibustering yesterday, Osmeña hit Drilon for the latter's statements quoted in the INQUIRER that day that Osmeña's filibustering was to prevent the reorganization of the committees that were given to the majority bloc.

He also called an "exaggeration" Drilon's statement that the minority seemed to be "hell-bent on not allowing the organization of the committees."

De Castro's prayer

Ironically, yesterday's session started with a prayer by Sen. Manuel "Noli" de Castro who pleaded for the minority bloc not to derail the reorganization of the committees.

De Castro expressed hope that yesterday would be "relevant" for the Filipino people.

"Please, please Lord," was how De Castro ended his prayer.

Apparently taking offense at De Castro's prayer, Sen. Vicente Sotto stood up to say on the floor that "God doesn't listen to repetitive prayers."

When asked to comment later by reporters, De Castro said jokingly he would just pray in Church because there would be no one to interpellate him.

The majority bloc actually met in a caucus early yesterday and sources said that members believed it was better to just allow Osmeña to continue his filibustering.

"Because PR wise, this would be bad for him. He loses before the bar of public opinion because he would be derailing work in the Senate," a Senate source said.

Humor intact

Despite the tension, the senators seemed to have kept their humor intact.

Legarda said Osmeña had brought *salabat*, a ginger concoction, to sustain his bid to make a long speech on the floor.

She said that she told Osmeña to make sure while he was filibustering, to give them "interesting" stories to listen to.

Osmeña himself said he plans to give the senators interesting stories and that the next session he plans to tell them about his escape from prison during martial law.

'Great filibuster'

But Osmeña has not broken the record of the "great filibuster" of all time, Sen. Roseller Lim, senior senators noted.

They said he stayed on the floor of the Senate, then located at the Legislative Building in Manila, for more than 24 hours.

"He brought several encyclopedias and the Bible and started reading from them," recalled Sen. Edgardo Angara, saying he was in college then.

But by his reckoning, Lim could have taken the floor for "four days and four nights."

According to Osmeña's cousin, Sen. John Osmeña, Lim delivered the speech to stop the election to the Senate presidency of Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Then a neophyte senator in 1972, John Osmeña recalled that Lim took the floor to buy time for Sen. Alejandro Almendras, who was arriving from the United States, to get to the Senate to help him block the election of Marcos.

Pissed off

"He pissed in his pants because he could not even go to the bathroom," said John Osmeña.

But Serge Osmeña had a different version.

"He asked his staff to stand around him so that he could urinate in a receptacle," Serge Osmeña said.

But Angara doubted this story. He believed here might have been a "gentlemen's agreement" to allow Lim to go to the bathroom "when he could not hold it anymore."

John Osmeña also has a record of filibustering to stop the majority Nacionalista Party from passing a bill creating the city of Toril in Davao.

Aligned with the Liberal Party then, Osmeña took the floor for seven hours.

"I read the dictionary until they gave up," said Osmeña, who ended his speech at 4 a.m.

He was allowed a suspension of the session to go to the washroom.

Osmeña recalled that then Sen. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo also filibustered for three hours by reading the Senate journal. Osmeña could not recall the issue Arroyo objected to.

Laundering money . . .

(From page A1)

respectively, of the US State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

Money laundering is "the criminal's way of trying to ensure that, in the end, crime pays," the paper said.

It enables individuals or groups engaged in drug trafficking, illegal arms sale, smuggling, prostitution rings, embezzlement, insider trading, bribery, computer fraud schemes and other criminal activities that generate huge sums to legitimize their ill-gotten gains.

According to a primer by the 29-member international group Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Money Laundering, the practice basically involves three stages:

- Placement, or moving the money from the scene of the crime (A) to a remote location (B), ideally to another country and preferably in a bank account, if possible one that is anonymous.
- Layering, or disguising the trail leading from A to B.
- Integration, or making the cash available to the criminals, along with a plausible explanation of how it came legally into their possession.

"Through these processes, a criminal tries to transform the monetary proceeds derived from illicit activities into funds with an apparently legal source," the paper said.

It also said that money laundering "transfers economic power from the market, the government and citizens to criminals," adding that "in short, it turns the old adage that crime doesn't pay on its head."

Citing the estimate of Michel Camdessus, former managing director of the International Monetary Fund, that the magnitude of money-laundering worldwide ran up to at least $600 billion, the paper noted that the amount represented "between 2 and 5 percent of the world gross domestic product."

The paper also said money laundering presented a complex and dynamic challenge to the world community.

"Indeed, the global nature of money laundering requires global standards and international cooperation if we are to reduce the ability of criminals to launder their proceeds and carry out their criminal activities," it said.

Origins

The US Mafia is widely believed to have invented the word and the practice of money laundering.

The Mafia is believed to have bought and operated a chain of laundromats as a means of mixing into its clean earnings the dirty cash obtained from prostitution, gambling, gunrunning, extortion and its other nefarious activities. As good cash businesses, laundromats were a good means of providing the appearance of an honest cash flow.

In practice, the money launderer first introduces his illegal profits into the financial system. He might do this by breaking up large amounts of cash into less conspicuous smaller sums. He then deposits this directly into a bank account, or by purchasing checks, treasury bills, money orders or other monetary instruments that are then collected and deposited into accounts at another location.

The layering stage takes place after the funds have entered the financial system. In this phase, the launderer does a number of conversions or movements of the funds to distance these from the source.

The launderer might channel funds through the purchase and sales of investment instruments. Or he may simply wire the funds through a series of accounts at various banks across the globe.

The Paris-based FATF reported that the use of widely scattered accounts for laundering was especially prevalent in jurisdictions that did not cooperate in anti-money laundering investigations.

In some instances, the launderer might disguise the transfers as payments for goods or services, thus giving these a legitimate appearance.

Having successfully processed his criminal profits through the first two phases of the process, the launderer then moves these to the third stage of integration where funds re-enter the legitimate economy.

The launderer might do this by investing funds into real estate, luxury assets or business ventures.

In the Philippines

Although the Philippines is a member of the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering and is a signatory to the 1998 United Nations Declaration Against Money Laundering, the FATF listed it as among 19 countries that tolerate money laundering.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said this was because of what the FATF perceived to be serious deficiencies in the anti-money laundering systems in the country, particularly as a result of its bank secrecy laws and the absence of legislation making money laundering a crime.

Last June 22, the FATF gave the Philippines until Sept. 30 to enact significant legislation against money laundering.

If the deadline is not met, FATF members may implement such measures as enhanced surveillance, reporting of financial transactions and other relevant actions.

The BSP ordered banks in April to phase out in a year all "numbered, anonymous or fictitious" accounts to address the issue of money laundering and clean up the Philippines' image as a haven for dirty money.

But while Representatives Jose de Venecia, Mark Jimenez, and Herminio Teves recently filed bills against money laundering, bringing dirty money from abroad into the Philippines or transferring them abroad is not yet illegal here. *Reports by Carlito Pablo and PDI Research Group*

CAGERS INCLUDED

312 athletes known today

By June Navarro

AFTER almost half a year of screening gold-medal potentials, sports officials will finally announce today the final composition of the Philippine delegation to the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games in September.

The joint Philippine Olympic Committee-Philippine Sports Commission SEAG Task Force is set to bare the list at 2 p.m. at the Medalla room of the PSC administration building.

Excluding basketball cagers, 312 athletes, 190 of them male, already passed the grade as of last night. Joining them are 62 coaches, 16 assistant coaches, 26 team managers and 37 technical crew.

POC secretary-general Romeo Ribaño, however, told the INQUIRER that the joint task force would still include the national dribblers, both men and women, in the final lineup.

"I don't know whether or not they will accept our plea but just the same, we will send whatever we have," said Ribaño.

SEAG chief of mission Freddie Jalasco and his deputies, sepak takraw's Mario Tanchangco and athletes and referees comission chair Nestor Ilagan, are set to enplane to Kuala Lumpur tomorrow in time for the chiefs of mission meeting and submit the list the following day.

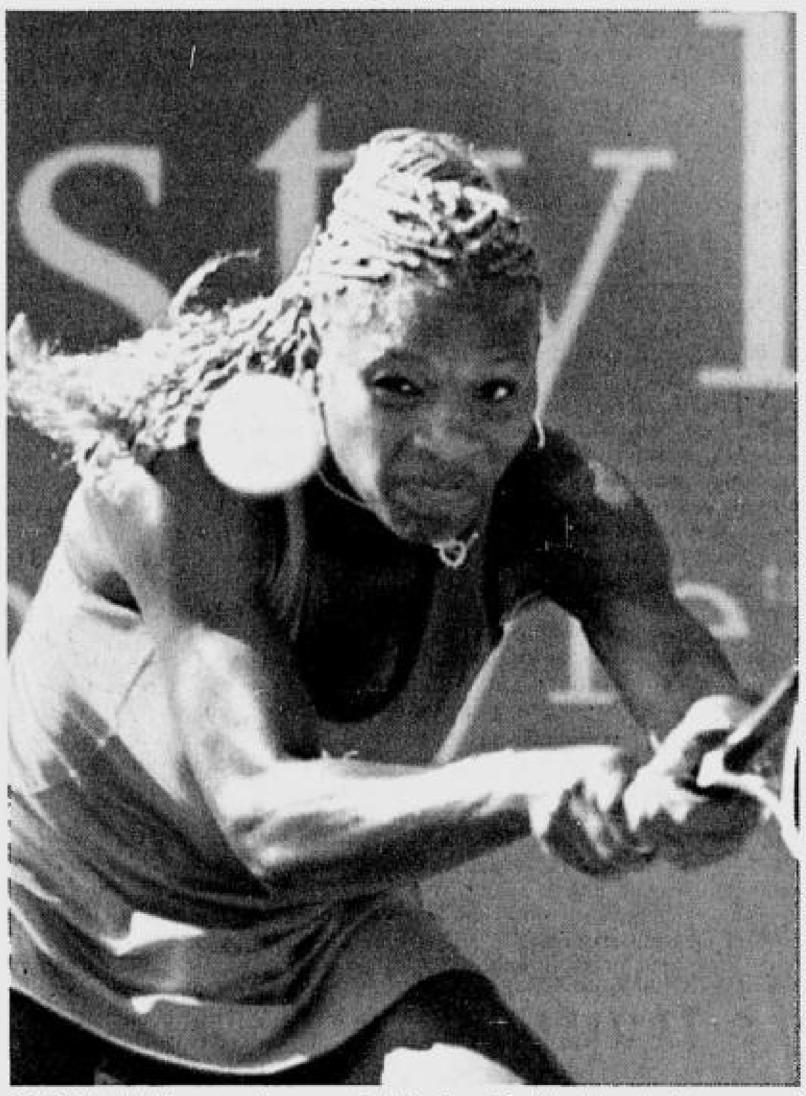
Ribaño said the move was not designed solely to beat the Aug. 11 deadline but also to have an available lineup once the International Basketball Federation suspension against the Basketball Association of the Philippines is lifted.

"At least the SEAG organizers wouldn't question us since the lineup for basketball was submitted before the deadline," Ribaño said.

The basketball lineup earlier submitted by Tiny Literal's faction was the one included in the final list.

Literal is the president of the breakaway BAP faction. Lito Puyat is the other BAP head. Their quarrel has forced the Fiba to suspend the association, jeopardizing the country's basketball participation in the SEA Games.

The INQUIRER learned that the lineup submitted included the same MBA players who won the recent Seaba basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.



SERENA Williams returns a shot to Jennifer Hopkins in the second round yesterday of the estyle.com Classic in Manhattan Beach, California. Williams won, 7-5, 6-3. AP

Jins present 25 medals to Petron

THE 46-MEMBER Petron Philippine Taekwondo team paid a courtesy visit on the Petron head office to present the 25 medals it captured at the recently concluded Korean Open Taekwondo Championships.

Petron team won eight golds, nine silvers and eight bronzes in the intensely fought tournament.

The courtesy call was led by Dr. Manolo Gabriel, the squad's head coach, along with two other coaches, Stephen Fernandez and Ricky Santiago.

Gold medalist Margarita Ma. Estela Bonifacio led the medal presentation before Petron Corporation President and CEO Motassim Al-Ma'ashouq and other officials of the oil company. Bonifacio won the 72-kg (heavyweight) category.

Sydney Olympics veterans Roberto Cruz and Jasmine Strachan also presented their medals. Cruz won silver, while Strachan captured bronze.

The team is currently undergoing rigid training in preparation for the Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur, scheduled on Sept. 9-17. Petron has been supporting the Philippine Taekwondo team's competitions and is a major sponsor of the team's trips abroad.

The jins are expected to deliver the goods in Kuala Lumpur, considering that the country is the top seed in the biennial meet.

Officials hope to draw 40 gold medals, banking on a dominant performance by both the male and female jins.

Paging Richie

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I LIKE that. The fact that we are submitting a basketball lineup to the Kuala Lumpur SEA Games is an indication that we intend to defend our crown. Cheers to Romy Ribaño, the Olympic movement's no-nonsense secretary general, who bared this bit of news yesterday.

I don't care if Tiny Literal and Lito Puyat want to fight up to the end of time. What I care for, what we should all care for, is the basketball gold we had won consecutively since the Games started in 1977. That gold belongs to this nation of 68 million or so. Not to Literal. Not to Puyat.

I haven't lost hope. The world basketball federation (Fiba) will soon see the light at the end of the tunnel: the Philippine Olympic Committee will decide the fate of our basketball participation in KL. The Fiba's job is merely ministerial in that it can only accept and not reject a decision of an NSA on matters of internal disputes.

In short, any decision made by the BAP should always be binding; it must be respected by the Fiba, for so long as it was done within the bounds of the association's by-laws. I believe the POC broke no law when it had previously recognized Puyat as the rightful BAP president.

Look what happened to golf.

The National Golf Association of the Philippines officials did not include both No. 1 Angelo Que and hotshot Cookie La'O to the team bound for Kuala Lumpur. Commissioner Richie Garcia of the Philippine Sports Commission disagreed but that's the most that he can do. He can never overrule the NGAP verdict.

But here's the catch.

Garcia, according to NGAP president Rod Feliciano, has kept on withholding the training expenses of the golf team. Garcia heads the Task Force to form the RP contingent to KL.

"I have advanced my own money (P100,000) for the training of both the men and women teams," said Rod. "Please tell Mr. Garcia that if he continues to withhold our budget, he should put his money where his mouth is."

Your call, Richie.

No. 2 Narvaez blanks Soo

SECOND seed Miguel Narvaez blanked Soo Han Chung, 6-0, 6-0, yesterday to reach the boys' 14-under semifinals in the Philta Classic III Age Group Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Narvaez will meet No. 3 Kyle Dandan, who scored a 6-0, 6-1 victory over Raine Vincent Gumban. Also advancing was No. 4 Arithmetico Lim, who beat Raymond Villarete, 6-3, 6-4.

In the girls division, No. 1 Bien Zoleta demolished Anthea Murfet, 6-0, 6-0, to forge a semifinal showdown with No. 3 Melissa Orteza, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Ariane Kristel Gumban in the 14-under class.

Other winners were No. 2 Catherine Flores over Anna Jonai Pascual, 6-0, 6-1, and Anna Buenviaje over Michelle Bumgarner, 6-0, 6-0.

Gaining semifinal slots in the girls' 12-under category were No. 1 Bambi Zoleta, who beat Sarah Jane Lina, 6-2, 6-4, and No. 2 Jessica Agra, who defeated Anthea Murfet, 6-3, 6-3.

The two-weekend tournament sponsored by PSC, East Asia Cargo and Dunlop balls will resume tomorrow, with the boys' 18-under quarterfinal round starting at 1 p.m.

Fernandez, Lee prevail

BACOLOD CITY—National Master Ernesto Fernandez and non-titled Vicente Lee III got back at their respective opponents in the second game of Round 4 Tuesday to force a playoff in the ongoing P2.2-million Glutaphos-Philippine Chess Grand Prix at the Sugarland Hotel in Bacolod City.

NM Fernandez of Pagadian City defeated NM Rogelio Vergaño of Cagayan de Oro City in 78 moves of a King's Indian while Lee III of Sagay City brought down NM Ernesto Jayme of Iloilo in 48 moves of Queen's Gambit Declined.

The victory evened their scores at 1-1 and forced a playoff in this event sponsored by Pascual Laboratories, Inc., a joint project of the City Government of Bacolod, Department of Interior and Local Government and Philippine Chess Federation, held in cooperation with Sugarland Hotel and Negros Navigation.

NMs Rodrigo Atotubo of Bacolod City, Alexander Lupian of Sto. Tomas (Davao), and Reggie Olay of Davao; Fide Master Jesse Noel Sales of Calamba City and non-titled Horizon Villanueva of Iloilo advanced to the next round of the competition.

Atotubo drew with NM Carlito Lavega of Sagay City in 43 moves of a Slav, while Sales drew with Femi Fazon of Surigao in 37 moves, also of Slav.

Lupian repeated over NM Cesar Mariano of Iloilo in 34 moves of a French Defense. Olay split the point with NM Eric Gloria of Bacolod City in 31 moves of another Slav and Villanueva prevailed over Glen Francis Panes of Talisay City in 34 moves of a Giuco Piano to earn slots in the next round of eight.

Meanwhile, NM Hamed Nouri of Lambunao, Iloilo and Josevito Tapulgo of Barangay Bata, Bacolod City, drew their match in 37 moves of a Reti opening to also force a playoff.

The winners in the Lee-Jayme, Fernandez-Vergaño and Nouri-Tapulgo matches will join Lupian, Olay, Villanueva, Atotubo and Sales in the round of eight.

Active chess slated Aug. 12

THE 3RD NCFP Open Active chess tournament comes off the wraps on Sunday, Aug. 12, at 9:30 a.m. at Egel's Sizzling House, 22 Matalino St. (beside Allied Bank, at the back of QC Hall), Diliman, Quezon, City.

Organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines, the one-day event is open to all players, rated or unrated.

A total cash pot of P20,000 will be at stake with the champion winning P7,000, while the runner-up, third, fourth, fifth and sixth places will receive P4,000, P2,000, P1,000, P500 and P200, respectively.

Other prizes are P1,000, P700, P500 and P300 each for the top four non-masters, while the top senior (55 years old and above), junior, kiddie and lady players will also get P500 each.

Invited to grace the opening ceremonies on Sunday are NCFP legal counsel lawyer Rudy Tacorda and NCFP honorary chair lawyer Matias V. Defensor. They will also perform the ceremonial moves.

Interested participants can inquire at the NCFP office at tels. 435-1114 or 435-1113. Registration will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis.

This NCFP-rated event will be a 7-round Swiss system affair with each player given 25 minutes to make all the moves necessary to finish the game.

Sampras advances; Boris, Ivan falter

SAMPRAS

MASON, Ohio—Pete Sampras, a three-time champion of the Tennis Masters-Cincinnati, advanced in the tournament's first round, while defending champion Thomas Enqvist was eliminated. The return to competitive tennis of Boris Becker after two years was short-lived Tuesday as he and partner Goran Ivanisevic were beaten, 6-3, 6-2, by Todd Woodbridge and Jonas Bjorkman. Sampras, who turns 30 on Sunday and has been fending off recent questions about when he might retire, reflected on the strength of challengers in today's world of pro tennis.

"It is tougher. No doubt about it," he said. "Guys aren't quite as fearful of the top guys and go out with nothing to lose and you see upsets."

The ninth-seeded Sampras, who is coming off a disappointing fourth-round loss at Wimbledon after winning the Grand Slam tournament seven of the last eight years, beat Nicolas Lapentti 6-3, 6-2 Tuesday.

Enqvist was upset 6-4, 6-0 by Nicolas Kiefer. It was only the second time since 1969 that the defending champion was eliminated in the first round.

Enqvist was one of three seeded players who lost Tuesday as third-seeded Marat Safin and No. 15 Wayne Ferreira (South Africa) also were upset.

Seeded players who won first-round matches in straight sets were No. 5 Lleyton Hewitt, No. 6 Yevgeny Kafelnikov, No. 8 Patrick Rafter and No. 13 Carlos Moya.

Hewitt fell behind 4-3 in the first set Tuesday night, but took over the match after unseeded opponent Magnus Norman double-faulted and went to a 6-4, 6-1 victory.

Enqvist, who was seeded 11th and ranked 13th in the world, lost to the 26th-ranked Kiefer in straight sets for the second consecutive week. Kiefer beat Enqvist, 6-2, 7-5, at the Tennis Masters Series-Canada tournament last week.

"He obviously has a game that doesn't suit my game," said Enqvist, who has lost to Kiefer three times this year while coming off surgery in December on his shoulder and right foot. "I made way too many errors, and I didn't move well. Against Nicolas, you can't make so many mistakes, like I did today."

The only other time a defending champion in Cincinnati lost in the next year's opening round was in 1997, when Andre Agassi was eliminated by Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten, this year's No. 1 seed. *AP*

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By
Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: PGA - The International Presented, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r), Tour Highlights at 11 p.m. on Star Sports

This is the PGA Tour at 4 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

CVS Charity Classic, Day One at 5 p.m. (r) on ESPN

TENNIS: Masters Series (Cincinnati), Early Round Coverage Day #3 at 1 p.m. and 9 p.m. (r), Early Round Coverage Day #4 tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN

PAL, Century golf pick US

IT'S all systems go for the 2nd Philippine Airlines—Century Park Hotel Golf Challenge, an annual sporting and charity event fast gaining recognition among golf aficionados in the U.S. West Coast, particularly Filipino-American businessmen. The event is set in Los Angeles at the Montebello Country Club in Montebello on Aug. 20 and at the Crystal Springs Golf Club in Burlingame on Aug. 27.

Over 140 US-based golfers are expected to participate in the competition initiated by the country's flag carrier and leading five-star hotel for the benefit of ASIAC Operation Rainbow Philippines, a charity that has treated more than 5,000 Filipinos with facial deformities. Spearheads of the event are Jesus Garcia, PAL advertising manager; Bobby Carpio, CPH general manager; Carlo Bello, and Steve Naguiat of CPH.

SPORTSWATCH

Orchard reopening Aug. 11

THE NEW Tifeagle greens of the renowned Palmer course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite will be opened for play via a member-dependent tournament Saturday, Aug. 11. A business class roundtrip ticket to Los Angeles donated by American Express Adventure will be at stake as a hole-in-prize for the first 60 teams that will register and compete in the 18-hole event dubbed the Palmer Comeback Tournament. Orchard general manager Tom Clemente said the tourney will give the participants the chance to test the playability of the brand-new greens built of Tifeagle which is now considered as the most durable and weather-resistant breed ever to come out. Orchard chair Conrad Benitez, president Dr. Carlo Magno and director Vicente Santos have already given the greens a high rating after a recent test together with Tim Walker of Sta. Elena Properties which carried out the construction. *AP*

A longer, stronger Augusta National

AUGUSTA, Georgia—Trees were bulldozed to create new tee boxes. One fairway bunker was extended 15 yards, while another was doubled in size. About the only thing left untouched after sweeping changes to Augusta National Golf Club were the azaleas. In what is considered the biggest overhaul in the 68-year history of the home of the Masters, the club altered nine holes and added nearly 300 yards in an effort to put a greater premium on accuracy off the tee. *AP*

Dvorak wins third decathlon title

EDMONTON, Alberta —Tomas Dvorak of the Czech Republic won his third straight world decathlon championship Tuesday, defeating Olympic champion Erki Nool of Estonia for the title of greatest athlete. Dean Macey of Britain overcame groin and elbow injuries to win the bronze. Dvorak finished with a championship record of 8,902 points, 87 ahead of Nool, while Macey's total was 8,603. "I can say that I am back, and I am here to stay," said the 29-year-old Czech. A knee injury affected his chances at last year's Sydney Games. The two-time defending champion took the lead early in the two-day event, only to have Macey claim a one-point advantage after the 400 meters that ended Monday's competition. Dvorak reclaimed the lead with a blazing 110 meters hurdles Tuesday and never looked back. *AP*

Canadian, Brazilian ousted on drugs

EDMONTON, Alberta—Drug tests of up to 10 athletes at the World Championships indicated the possible use of a banned hormone, the IAAF's anti-doping chief said Tuesday. A positive drug test would be the first at the championships, though two runners—one Canadian and one Brazilian—have been kicked out because of positive results from testing conducted before the competition. Athletics Canada said Tuesday that Venolyn Clarke, the national champion at 100 meters, was kicked off the team because she tested positive for the anabolic steroid stanozolol at a pre-championships training camp in Calgary on July 31. Arne Ljungqvist, a vice president of track's governing body, said initial tests showed elevated levels of red blood cells—which can signal the use of the endurance-boosting hormone EPO but also can occur naturally. The athletes involved—including Olga Yegorova, a Russian distance runner who is competing in the championships after a seemingly positive EPO result was thrown out—will now have urine tests to check for EPO. *AP*

Iriga hosting women boxing in October

WOMEN boxing on local shores will have its baptism of fire in October this year when the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines holds the 2001 National Juniors, Seniors and Women's Open Boxing Championships in Iriga City.

The three-in-one championships, set Oct. 15 to 21, will have competitions in eight weight categories for the women's division, which has a big chance of being included in the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics. The juniors and seniors (men's) will have 12 weight classes each.

"We are including the women's division in this year's National Open. Women boxing is now being promoted worldwide and in the event this is included in the Olympics, the country will have another avenue in its quest for that elusive Olympic gold medal," Manny Lopez, Abap president, said.

"And this early, we know that Iriga City, headed by Mayor Emmanuel Alfelor with its facilities and strong support to amateur sports, particularly boxing, will be very successful in staging this championship," Lopez said.

LOPEZ

According to Lopez, those eligible to participate in the women's division are boxers not over 25 years old by Oct. 15 this year.

The seniors must not be over 33 by the same date while the juniors must not be over 17. Members of the national training pool are allowed to participate in any team of their choices.

Tournament format allows a region to field any number of teams, which will be limited to only one boxer per weight division. The knockout system of elimination will be used.

Rahman versus Lewis

NEW YORK —Hasim Rahman will defend the WBC-IBF heavyweight titles for a minimum of $10 million in a November rematch with Lennox Lewis. "We're very excited the deal is done," Steve Nelson, Rahman's co-manager, said Tuesday. "We believe we're going to win again." Rahman became champion with a surprising fifth-round knockout of Lewis on April 22 at South Africa. "Rahman has signed, Lewis has signed and TVKO wants it," Nelson said. TVKO is the pay-per-view arm of the HBO television channel, which has a multifight deal with Lewis. *AP*

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA By Mr. 999

Race 1—1. Timeless Beauty 2. Champs Elysees 3. How About Me 4. Denon

Race 2—1. Palaban 2. Andee's Joy 3. D Greatest

Race 3—1. Noble Regent 2. Midnight Rose 3. Gemstone 4. Chief Navigator

Race 4—1. Hotrod 2. Rindo Maker 3. Richie Rich 4. Raggedy Belle 5. Super Spoiled

Race 5—1. Cubano 2. Imperial Passion 3. Grace and Fortune 4. Majestic Ruler

Race 6—1. Proud Idol 2. Battle Hero 3. Hostile Witness 4. Galvalume 5. Powerhouse

Race 7—1. Easy Win 2. One More Time 3. Solitaire 4. Trick Shot 5. Panjee

Race 8—1. Rosalinda 2. Law Student 3. Daseldurf 4. Kingair 5. Alluring

Race 9—1. Intunda 2. Southern Skies 3. Above All 4. Earth Angel 5. Waving Oscar/Sunny View

Dodgers nose out Pirates, 2-1

PITTSBURGH—Terry Adams beat Pittsburgh for the third consecutive time this season and Eric Karros homered for his second consecutive game-winning hit Tuesday to lead the Los Angeles Dodgers over the Pirates 2-1. Adams (8-4) improved to 6-2 since moving into the starting rotation with his second excellent start in three weeks. He allowed six hits in seven innings—only two after the third inning—and has yielded only 11 hits in 17 innings against Pittsburgh this season. *AP*

Fund-rasing run Sunday

OVER 1200 entries will answer the starting gun in this Sunday's Cerebral Palsy fund-raising run. The 10K, 5K, and 3K event which will be run in Makati City will be fired off promptly at 6 a.m. by William Balliett, project chair of the Cerebral Palsy Run. This was announced by Lewis Edwards, chair of the Philippine Cerebral Palsy Inc., organizer of the event.

San Miguel, Red Bull advance to PBA finals

GAMES SUNDAY *(Araneta Coliseum)*
4:15 p.m.—Alaska Milk vs Purefoods (for 3rd)
6:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Red Bull (Game 1)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SAN Miguel Beer's grandslam mission is on the right track.

Last night, the Beermen removed just another stumbling block to their dominance by spanking Alaska Milk, 83-71, to enter the PBA Commissioner's Cup championship at the Ynares Center.

It was the fourth straight finals stint and 24th overall for the Beermen as they gear for a triple crown they last achieved in 1989. They have won each conference dating back from the Commissioner's Cup last year.

The win, which wrapped up the best-of-five semifinals series (3-2), also opened the door for San Miguel to aspire for its 17th conference crown, the most by any team in league history.

In the second game, Batang Red Bull whipped Purefoods, 87-77, to arrange a best-of-seven series for the crown against SMB.

Game 1 will be played at the Araneta Coliseum on Sunday starting at 6:30 p.m.

"I give credit to Alaska Milk for pushing us to the limit in this conference," said SMB coach Jong Uichico, whose team was the overwhelming favorites to win this conference.

"They made us work hard," added Uichico, who himself is holding an unprecedented 5-of-5 track record in championships. "But we did what we had to do."

And that meant finally finishing off the Aces, who despite a heavily revamped lineup managed to force a sudden-death with an emphatic overtime triumph last Friday.

But last night, the Aces just couldn't get their acts together. "It's one of those game when we just can't focus on things we have to do," said coach Tim Cone.

Though the Beermen weren't threatened throughout the game, Alaska managed to make some scare in the endgame, creeping from an 18-point lead to just 11 (72-61) with five minutes in the game.

Alaska once again moved to within 11 (78-67) with three minutes left but Kenneth Duremdes botched a driving layup and Sean Chambers was slapped an offensive foul.

From that point, Danny Seigle sealed their doom with an unmolested three-pointer from the left flank that quelled whatever uprising the Aces were plotting.

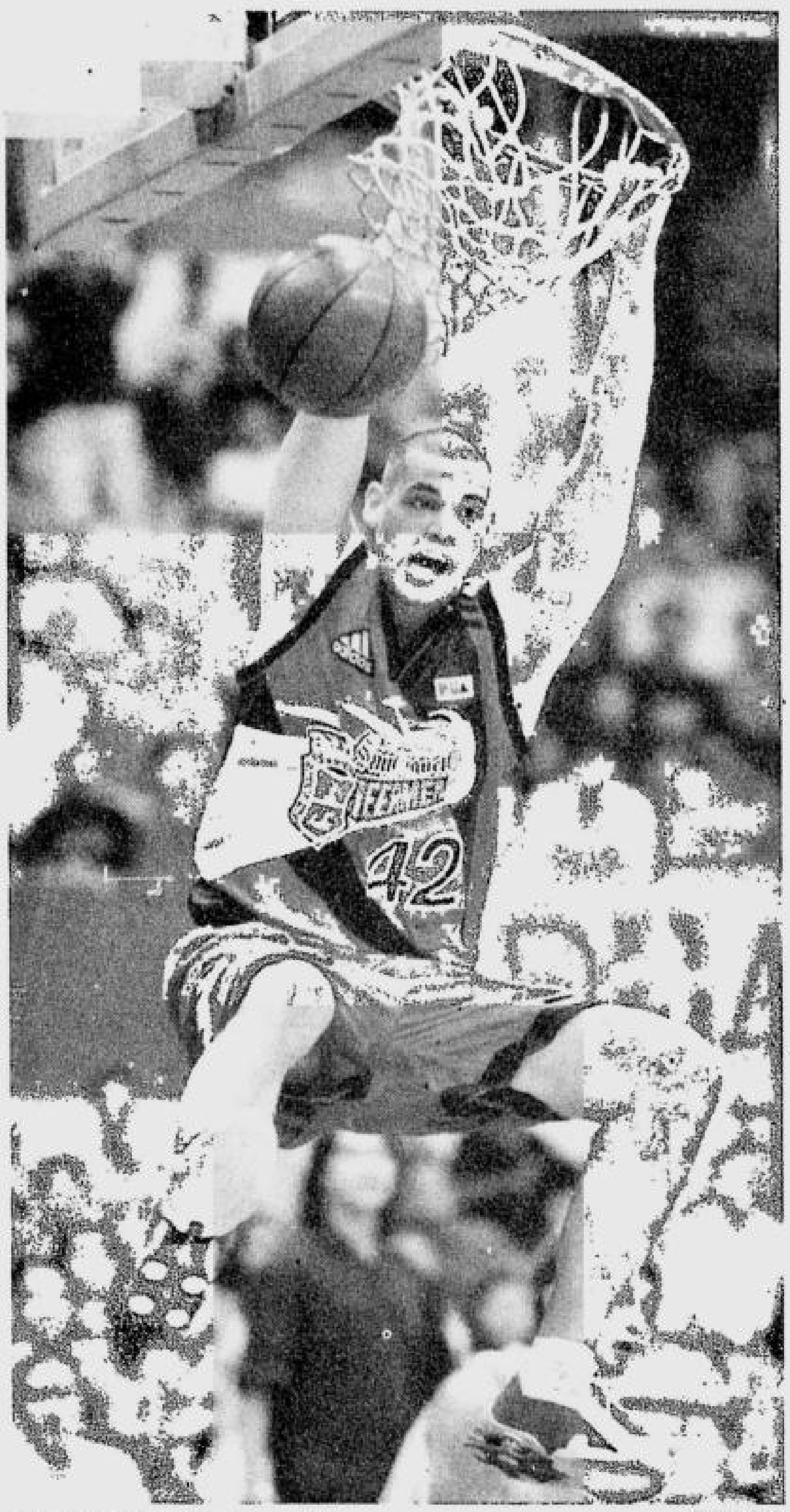
Nate Johnson also shone especially when placed side by side the older and smaller Chambers, making 20 points, 15 rebounds, five assists, three blocks and one steal.

Scores:

SMB 83 – Seigle 28, Johnson 20, Ildefonso 14, Fiacela 10, Lago 5, Pena 4, Belasco 2, Abuda 0.

ALASKA 71 – Duremdes 17, Peek 17, Allado 12, Arigo 9, Chambers 9, Santos 7, Ordonio 0, Evans 0.

Quarters: 17-16, 40-31, 64-47, 83-71.



DANNY SEIGLE: Game 5 top scorer.

FILE PHOTO

Eagles eye share of lead vs UE 5

STANDINGS	W	L
La Salle	5	1
FEU	5	1
Ateneo	4	1
UE	3	2
NU	3	3
UP	1	4
UST	1	4
Adamson	0	6

GAMES TODAY
10:30 a.m.—UST vs UP (Jrs)
12:30 p.m.—UE vs Ateneo (Jrs)
2:30 p.m.—UST vs UP (Srs)
5:00 p.m.—UE vs Ateneo (Srs)

By Dennis U. Eroa

TITLE-HUNGRY Ateneo tries to force a three-way tie for the lead when it collides with dangerous University of the East today in the UAAP men's basketball championship at the Loyola Gym.

To register their fifth straight win, the Blue Eagles must check the Warriors' well-oiled transition game anchored on Paul Artadi, Ronald Tubid and rebounding demons Jay-Ar Estrada and James Yap.

Gametime is set at 5 p.m., after the 2:30 p.m. tiff between skidding University of Santo Tomas and University of the Philippines, both sporting 1-4 win-loss cards.

The Red Warriors (3-2) are determined to come back after getting whacked by the FEU Tamaraws, 78-67, last Sunday. To upstage the Blue Eagles, the Red Warriors need to clamp down on Ateneo's menacing frontline (Rich Alvarez, Enrico Villanueva, Paolo Bugia) and check wingmen Larry Fonacier and Magnum Membrere. Artadi, 5-foot-11, will test rookie-sensation Lewis Tenorio.

Ronald Tubid, Estrada, Olan Omiping and Arnold Booker will give the Warriors the needed offensive sock. Booker is the same man who nearly triggered a free-for-all during a UE- Ateneo game last year at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

This is the Tigers' worst start since 1988. The España-based dribblers need to recover with a victory over the Maroons to enhance their chance of making the Final Four.

The Tigers are wanting in take-charge guys who can keep them in the thick of the fight during crucial stretches of the game. Veterans Emer Oreta, Derick Hubalde, Alwyn Espiritu and Nino Gelig need to play consistently.

Lacking in height but not in fighting hearts, the Maroons will rely on Mike Bravo, Mark Jomalesa and Abby Santos to collar the Tigers.

JRU Bombers shoot for 1st-round sweep

By June Navarro

GAMES TODAY Today (Rizal Memorial Coliseum)
12nn—Mapua vs San Beda (jrs/srs)
3 p.m.—JRU vs St. Benilde (jrs/srs)

JOSE Rizal University goes for a first-round sweep when it battles defending champion College of St. Benilde today in the NCAA varsity basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Gametime is 5 p.m. or two hours after the Mapua-San Beda College tussle set at 1:30 p.m.

At 6-0, the Bombers are the odds-on picks as the Blazers have yet to snap out of a four-game losing slump at 2-4.

Nostalgia will surely be written all over the Bombers' faces as they experienced a similar situation last season.

A year ago, the Bombers swept the first-round elimination but unfortunately bowed out of contention after the Blazers showed them the door in the Final Four.

This time around, it would be a different story as the Bombers' confidence level shot up to intolerable heights after rolling past heftier and more proficient foes.

And perhaps the Blazers wouldn't be spared from such beating owing the defending titlists' downward trend.

"How I wish we could sustain our winning ways until the Finals. I hope last year's incident won't happen again," said JRU head coach Boy De Vera.

One thing going for the Blazers though is the return of their coach Dong Vergeire.

He was slapped with a three-game suspension after the Blazers' winning encounter against the San Beda Red Lions three weeks back.

10 YEARS AGO

LEROY Burrell and Carl Lewis powered the US team to a world record of 37.67 seconds in the 400-meter relay at the Zurich athletic meet in Switzerland. Burrell and Lewis beat the French team which set the old mark at the 1990 European championships.

MBA FIRST PHASE

Knights-Blades best-of-3 duel set

GAMES TOMORROW (semifinals)
USLS Gym Bacolod City
3:00 p.m.—Negros vs Cebuana Lhuillier
Sentrum De La Salle Lipa
5:30 p.m.—LBC Batangas vs Andok's San Juan

By Roy Luarca

THE ANDOK'S San Juan Knights really have the FedEx Laguna Lakers' number.

Flaunting their defense and better team play, the Knights beat the Lakers anew, 93-81, last night to claim the last semifinals slot in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the San Juan Gym.

It was the third straight victory by the Knights over the Lakers in this conference and their eighth in nine outings in the last two years as they arranged a best-of-three semis series with the LBC Batangas Blades starting tomorrow.

The Lakers bowed out of the pennant race and kept their dubious record of not having won at the San Juan gym.

The Knights, true to their reputation, were able to neutralize Chris Clay and take Jeffrey Flowers out of the game.

Clay was held to 24 points, only four in the fourth, while Flowers got ejected due to two technical fouls with the Knights ahead, 77-62, and time down to 5 minutes and 38 seconds.

Gilbert Castillo, who guarded Clay in the first three quarters, also contributed in other aspects with 18 points in the first three quarters, seven rebounds and one block to earn best player of the game honors.

The court generalship of Chito Victolero and the defensive prowess of Omanzie Rodriguez also held the Knights together as the Lakers desperately tried to wage rallies.

The Lakers actually moved to within 52-47, only to be halted on their tracks by an 11-2 blast that was triggered and ended by Victolero treys.

With Bruce Dacia piercing the shaded lane, the Knights, who hardly missed the services of the injured Randy Alcantara and the suspended Kalani Ferreria, posted their biggest spread at 77-60, midway of the fourth quarter.

Though the outcome was almost evident, 83-70, with 2:25 to go, the Lakers went on a fouling binge but it too went for naught as the Lakers made eight of 11 freethrow attempts in that span.

The scores:

ANDOK'S SAN JUAN 93—Castillo 18, Dacia 16, Victolero 15, Calaguio 12, Rodriguez 10, Capobres 8, Reavis 7, Newton 5, Otto 2, Aying 0, J. Rodriguez 0.

FEDEX LAGUNA 81—Clay 24, Flowers 15, Melencio 14, Mendiola 8, Garcia 6, Regidor 4, Nicdao 2, Simon 2, Barbosa 2, Lopez 2, Domingo 0.

Quarters: 26-23, 47-41, 69-56, 93-81.

Bradley German citizen

BERLIN—German basketball officials said Tuesday Shawn Bradley of the Dallas Mavericks has been granted German citizenship, allowing the towering NBA center to play for his new national team. The 2.29 meter (7-ft.6) Bradley was born in Germany, the reason why he could apply for a German passport, and will join fellow Maverick Dirk Nowitzki on the national squad.

Soccer semis

GAMES SUNDAY:
1:00 p.m. – Navy vs PAF
3:30 p.m. – Army vs Kaya FC

NAVY, Army and Kaya Football Club chalked up lopsided victories Sunday to barge into the crossover semifinals of the 1st Army-Utilco International invitational football tournament at the Ascom field in Fort Bonifacio.

Navy shutout PCU-Taft, 5-0, Army blasted Far Eastern University, 10-0, and Kaya crushed University of Asia and the Pacific, 14-0, to join idle Air Force in the semifinals.

PCU (Dasmariñas) and College of St. Benilde battled to a 1-1 draw in the other match of the series organized by Philippine Army, sponsored by Utilco International Trading and sanctioned by the Philippine Football Federation.

The semifinals will be played Sunday, Aug. 12.

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	67	46	.593	
Boston	64	48	.571	2 1/2
Toronto	53	60	.469	14
Baltimore	47	67	.412	20 1/2
Tampa Bay	38	75	.336	29
Central				
Cleveland	63	49	.562	
Minnesota	63	49	.562	
Chicago	55	56	.495	7 1/2
Detroit	47	64	.423	15 1/2
Kansas City	44	69	.389	19 1/2
West				
Seattle	82	31	.726	
Oakland	63	50	.558	19
Anaheim	59	54	.522	23
Texas	49	64	.434	33

NATIONAL LEAGUE

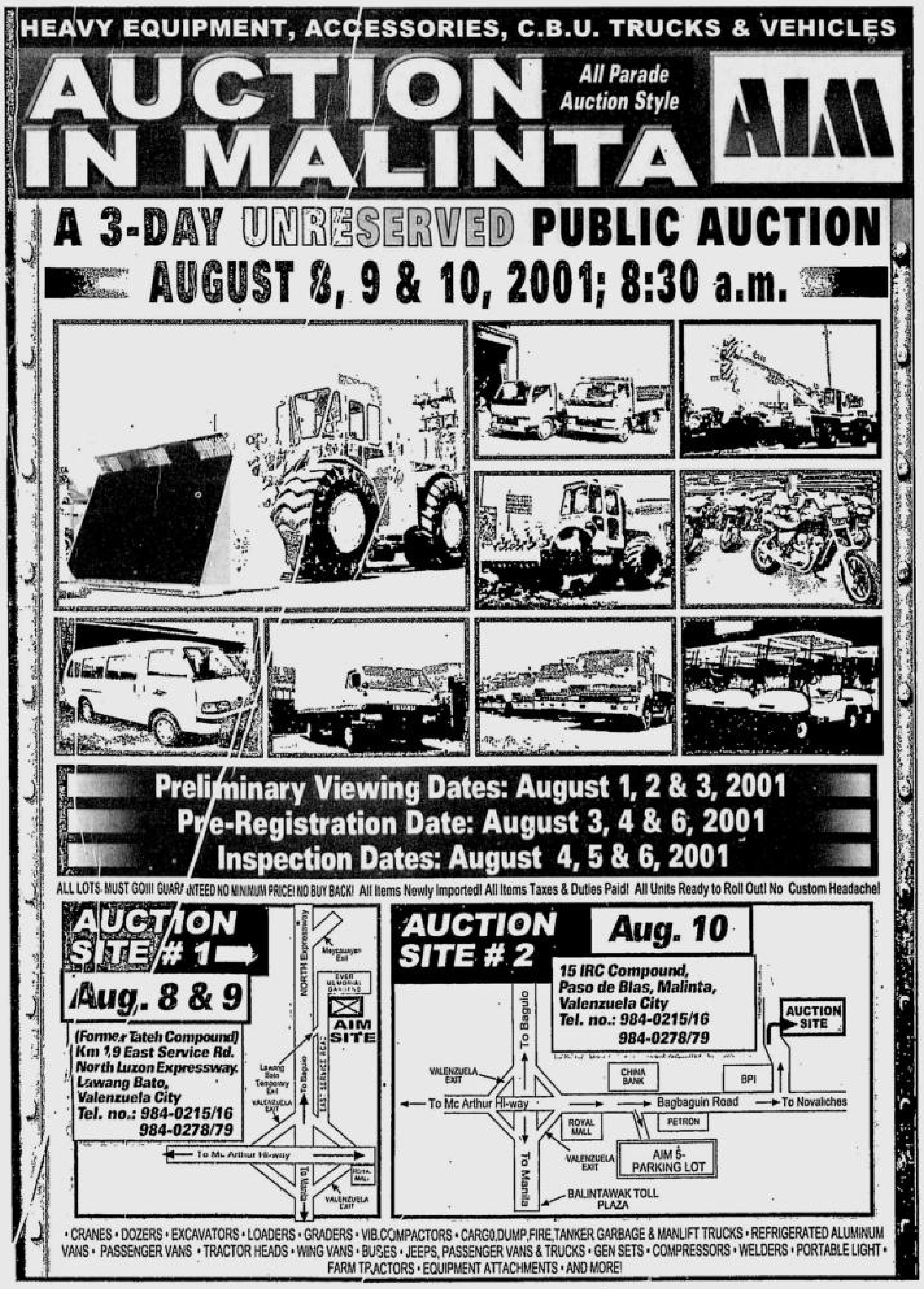
East	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	64	48	.571	
Philadelphia	61	51	.545	3
Florida	57	55	.509	7
New York	52	61	.460	12 1/2
Montreal	47	66	.416	17 1/2
Central				
Chicago	64	47	.577	
Houston	62	50	.554	2 1/2
St. Louis	57	54	.513	7
Milwaukee	47	63	.427	16 1/2
Cincinnati	46	65	.414	18
Pittsburgh	43	68	.387	21
West				
Los Angeles	64	49	.566	
San Francisco	63	50	.558	1
Arizona	62	50	.554	1 1/2
San Diego	54	58	.482	9 1/2
Colorado	46	66	.411	17

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Tampa Bay 3, N.Y. Yankees 2; Cleveland 7, Minnesota 2; Baltimore 7, Kansas City 3; Detroit 7, Texas 3; Seattle 5, Toronto 4, 14 innings; Oakland 5, Boston 2; Anaheim 6, Chicago White Sox 3.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Florida 10, Arizona 4; St. Louis 8, Montreal 1; Los Angeles 2, Pittsburgh 1; Philadelphia 7, San Diego 3; San Francisco 9, Cincinnati 3, 11 innings; N.Y. Mets 3, Milwaukee 0; Atlanta 6, Houston 5; Chicago Cubs 5, Colorado 4 *AP*



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METRO
LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

- **Directors solid behind Assunta, 'Diaries'** A18

Ma dies to save daughter

Father wants to have sex with the girl

BY NELSON F. FLORES

A WOMAN was shot dead by her own husband in Taguig on Tuesday after she tried to protect her daughter from the sex-starved father.

MA DIES/ A18

WAZZZZUP?
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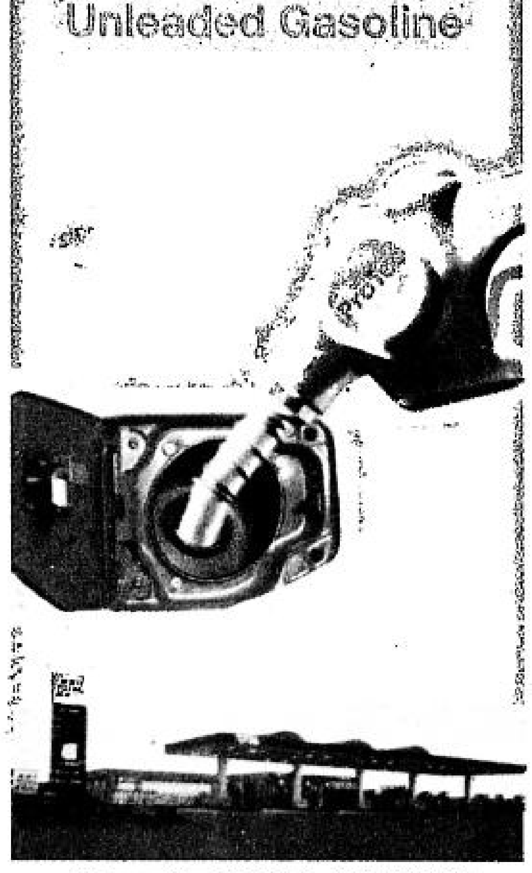

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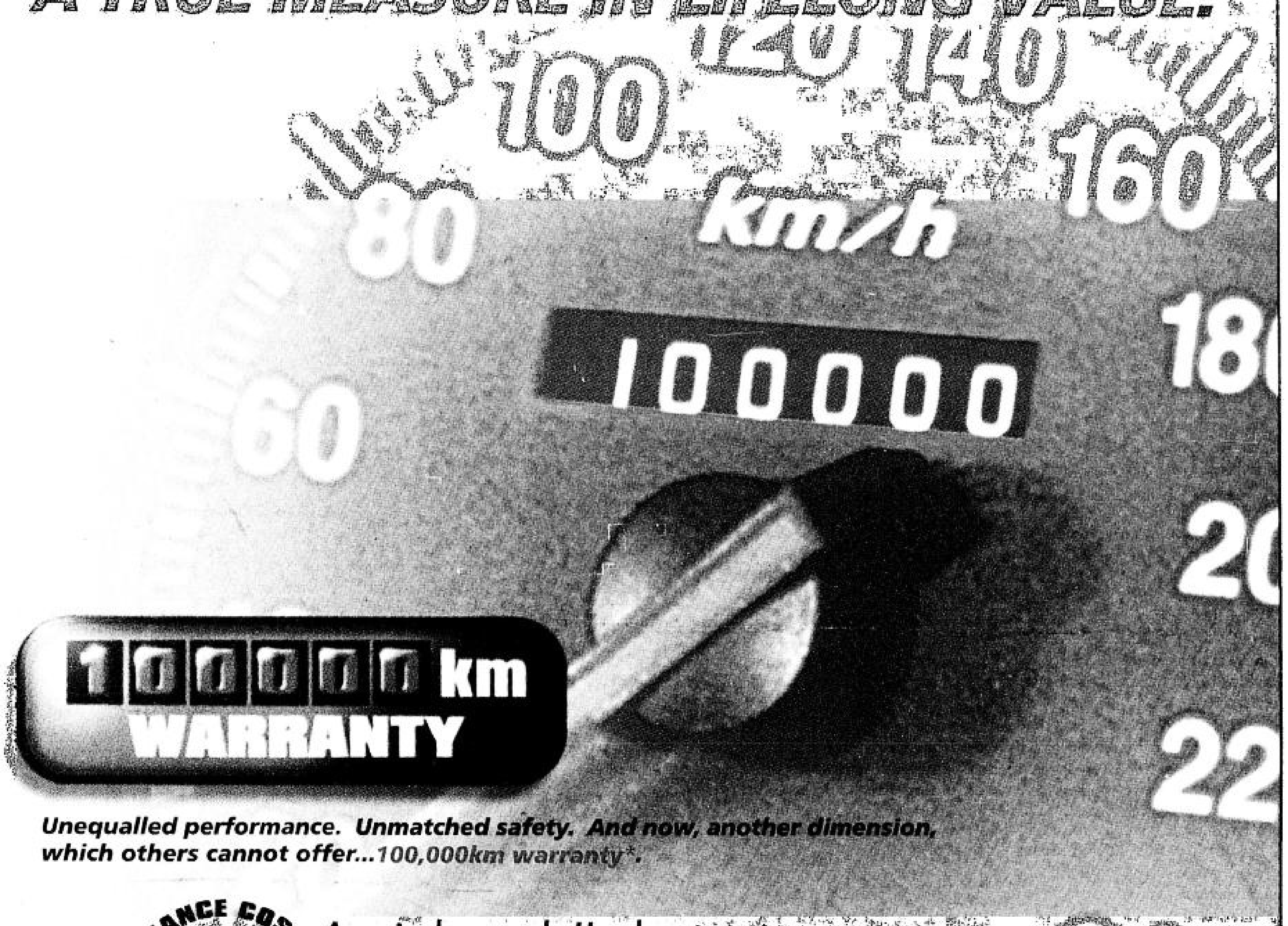

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Directors solid behind Assunta, 'Diaries'

By Leah Salterio

THE DIRECTORS' Guild of the Philippines (DGPI) yesterday expressed its support for the continued exhibition of the sexy drama, "Red Diaries," after the Philippine National Police tried to have the film withdrawn from theaters last week.

PNP chief Director General Leandro Mendoza asked Malacañang to recall "Red Diaries" from movie theaters, saying it tarnished the image of policemen.

In a statement, the DGPI said it appreciated the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board's decision to uphold the exhibition of the film, citing the same reasons former censors chief Nicanor Tiongson pointed out when he allowed the showing of "Live Show."

"Like 'Live Show,' 'Red Diaries' was legitimately reviewed, deliberated upon and approved for exhibition by the board," the DGPI statement said.

"Red Diaries" stars 18-year-old Assunta de Rossi, who is of Filipino-Italian descent. The film is produced by Regal Entertainment and directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes.

DGPI president Joey Reyes cited the issue of freedom of expression in the case of "Red Diaries."

Reyes directed the controversial "Live Show," which was banned by Malacañang after the Catholic Church strongly criticized the sex movie.

"The current administration has this time opted to uphold a validly issued MTRCB permit, for this is only fitting," the statement said. "Whatever spin may be applied to distinguish one case, morality or immorality of sexual content in the movies or fair and unfair portrayals of government institutions in films, it is essentially an issue of freedom of expression."

Mendoza said policemen were cast in a bad light in the movie.

"Red Diaries" is a trilogy of three women all portrayed by De Rossi. In one episode, De Rossi plays the battered wife of a corrupt police officer, who lets five other lawmen gang-rape her after her husband discovers her illicit affair with another man.

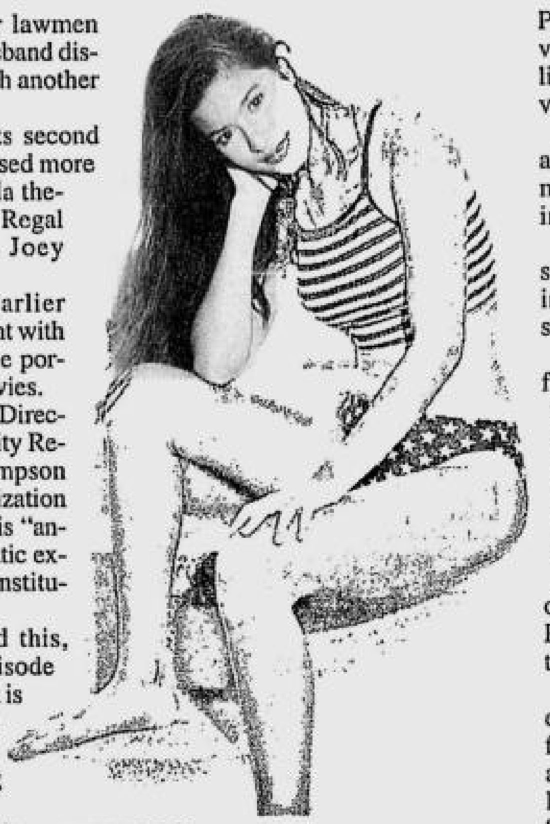
The film is now on its second weekend run and has grossed more than P40 million in Manila theaters alone, according to Regal supervising producer Joey Gosiengfiao.

The PNP cited an earlier memorandum of agreement with the MTRCB regarding the portrayal of policemen in movies.

The head of the PNP's Directorate for Police Community Relations Chief Supt. Thompson Lantion noted the dramatization of cops in "Red Diaries" is "another unwarranted cinematic exploitation of the police institution."

But the DGPI denied this, saying the particular episode which involves policemen is a prime component of a film director's social responsibility to the viewing public.

Mendoza earlier said the PNP cannot afford to be typecast as villains before the eyes of the public, whether in real life or on the silver screen.


DE ROSSI

But the DGPI said this has not always been the case. It cited filmmakers who have extolled the police in action movies and biopics.

"The producers are entitled to the same freedom in depicting policemen in less than flattering manner," the statement said.

"While 'Red Diaries' is a work of fiction, it is premised on social realities existing today, such as poverty and violence. Filmmakers make movies that reflect, expose, interpret, theorize or express opinions about social conditions and human responses to them."

The DGPI also pointed out cases of police brutality and corruption in PNP history under various administrations.

"The DGPI recognizes that there exist men and women in the police force who put their lives on the line and do their jobs responsibly for the love of country," the statement said. "But brutality, insensitivity and corruption are cases continuously reported in broadcast news and print media."

The DGPI has 52 directors in its roster. Aside from De los Reyes and Reyes, other members include Mel Chionglo, Emmanuel Borlaza, Peque Gallaga, Jeffrey Jeturian, Joel Lamangan, Toto Natividad, Gil Portes and Carlitos Siguion-Reyna.

The MTRCB rejected a request by the PNP to review "Red Diaries." It said the board could no longer recall the movie after it has been reviewed twice, approved for showing and given an R-18 rating.

"Under the law, after the film has been approved by the board, and its permit to exhibit has been issued, the board can no longer recall the same unless a violation of PD 1986 has been committed," said MTRCB chair Alejandro Roces in a letter to the PNP dated July 27.

"In effect, the board loses its jurisdiction over the said film. Only Malacañang can order a review of the same."

Ping believes his own lies

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

BELEAGUERED Sen. Panfilo Lacson has given his accuser, Col. Victor Corpus, a special power of attorney (SPA) "to check, audit and receive all pertinent documents or data relative to my alleged account(s) with Citibank Hong Kong (and) to withdraw or close all aforesaid accounts if they so exist."

A copy of the SPA was faxed to Corpus' office at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) by the office of the senator.

Corpus just smiled when he received the special power of attorney which cited him as the "attorney-in-fact."

***

Why the Mona Lisa smile of Corpus?

Because the senator did not include the banks in the United States and Canada in the SPA. Lacson had apparently withdrawn the accounts and forewarned the bank before Corpus came out with the exposé on the senator's multimillion-dollar accounts last Saturday.

Here's the story:

On July 25, the Isafp made an official request to the Citibank Hong Kong to divulge Lacson's accounts with the bank.

On July 26, Lacson left for Hong Kong. Is it any coincidence that he went to the former British Crown Colony a day after the Isafp made the official request?

What can be surmised from this? That Lacson moved his accounts with Citibank Hong Kong. Apparently, he was informed by the bank that the Isafp was already on the trail of his accounts.

So, Citibank Hong Kong was not lying when it said that the accounts mentioned by Corpus did not exist. How could they when those accounts were already closed?

***

But why did the senator exclude the banks in Canada and the United States in the SPA?

Because he wasn't sure if the US and Canadian banks in question would not divulge his accounts with them and hand those accounts to Corpus as a result of the SPA.

***

But Lacson has cause for worry because a powerful United States congressman is cooperating with Philippine government investigators on the hidden wealth of Lacson and former President Estrada in the United States.

Al Santoli, senior national security and foreign policy adviser to Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, said so in a press statement yesterday.

Santoli, who gave his telephone number for confirmation (1-202-225-2415), said there was "very real initial evidence of large amounts of money being carried into the United States (by Lacson and Erap)."

***

Here's the full text of Santoli's press statement:

"I have checked with appropriate US government sources. They confirm that United States law enforcement agencies are involved, in cooperation with the Philippine government, in this investigation of Lacson/Estrada based on very real initial evidence of large amounts of money being carried into the US. The US agencies, maintaining proper due process protocol, are not discussing details of the investigation. Congress cannot and will not press for details at this time, out of respect for US due process of law and protocol. As Vice Chairman of the House Asia/Pacific Subcomittee, Congressman Rohrabacher will request a briefing by the law enforcement agencies on their findings, in accord with US law, after the investigation is completed, which could take some weeks or months. **However, Victor Corpus is correct that the US government is seriously investigating this case** (underscoring supplied—RT).

"You can release this verbatim statement to the Filipino media. If they have any questions, they can contact me at 1-202-225-2415."

***

Since the time he began going around with Erap, his boss for eight and a half years, Lacson has become a good actor.

He not only can lie with a straight face but he can also act out his lies.

This is illustrated by the fact that he has sponsored, along with Sen. Loren Legarda, a bill against money laundering.

What does this mean? That Lacson believes in his own lies.

***

If you knew Lacson as I know him, you would have fallen off your chair listening to his privilege speech on Monday.

Here are very amusing parts of that speech:

"The democratic principle that no one is above the law requires equal treatment for all offenders. It makes due process an absolute right to the accused. It makes the presumption of innocence the first order of the law.

"The criminal justice system has been devised, by law and convention, to maintain a safe place for everyone, protect the law-abiding from the lawless and **punish the criminal in accordance with law** (again, underscoring supplied—RT)

Ikaw ba talaga yan, Ping?

How do you account for the countless crime suspects, as well as innocent citizens, that you ordered executed without trial?

***

In interviews I've had with my colleagues in media since Lacson's privilege speech, I am invariably asked what message I would give the senator.

I'll repeat my message to Senator Lacson for the record:

Karmic justice is beginning to catch up with you for your ruthlessness in dealing with human lives and your other crimes.

In time you will have your just due according to the Universal Law of Retribution and Reward. That's for sure.

NBI arrests Chinese, Muslim drug dealers

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation seized one-and-a-half kilos of shabu with a street value of P2 million from two suspected Chinese drug lords and a Muslim drug pusher in Cavite and Caloocan City over the weekend.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco identified the Chinese suspects as Leman Dela Cruz Ang, 36, of Sta. Cruz, Manila, and Zhangwei Lu, 31, a native of Chio Sai in China, and a resident of Galleria in Binondo, Manila.

Wycoco said his men also arrested Kalil Maraki Arab, alias Bok, Yusup and Abdul, 21, a native of Matarong, Maguindanao, and a resident of Dasmariñas, Cavite.

The suspects refused to comment on the charges when they were presented to reporters in a press conference at the NBI yesterday morning.

The Special Task Force Division and the Narcotics Division of the NBI acted on information they received that the two Chinese traders were engaged in the large-scale sale and distribution of shabu.

The two divisions also received reports that the Chinese suspects employed a couple—known only as Bing and Ariel—to distribute shabu in Dasmariñas.

"Surveillance was conducted which confirmed said reports," said STF chief Marianito Panganiban. "On Aug. 2, a deal was set up by an undercover agent for the purchase of a kilo of shabu for P580,000 on M.H. Del Pilar Street in Caloocan City."

The Chinese suspects were immediately arrested during the operation, according to Panganiban.

On Aug. 6, NBI agents went to Dasmariñas to search for the couple.

But the agents failed to locate the couple. Instead, they came upon Maraki Arab alias "Bok," who claimed that he was the couple's financier and offered to transact business with them.

When the agents asked for a half kilo of shabu from Maraki Arab, the suspect handed to the agents the shabu contained in a plastic bag right there and then, Panganiban said.

"The agents immediately arrested him," Panganiban said.

Drug charges will be filed against the suspects today, Panganiban added.

No one to turn to, lovelorn teen kills self

By Jerome Aning

HE tried to win back his estranged girlfriend.

When he failed, a 16-year-old youth slashed his wrist before hanging himself in Sampaloc, Manila late Tuesday.

Dominic Samonte, a high school student and resident of 1095-B Negros St., Sampaloc, did not reach the Ospital ng Sampaloc alive.

SPO1 Edgar Ko of the city police's homicide section said Samonte's body was discovered by a maid around 11 p.m. hanging from a railing of a spiral staircase inside the house.

The maid claimed she was about to fetch water downstairs when her feet touched the victim's head. She said she switched on the lights and was shocked to see Samonte dangling from the stairs.

Investigators learned that the youth and his girlfriend broke up last week. The victim reportedly became desperate after the girl refused to go back to him despite his efforts to mend their relationship.

Samonte had also no one else to turn. His parents are both working overseas.

Atienza threatens stop to VAT scheme

THE MANILA city government yesterday threatened to stop collecting value-added taxes in the capital because of Malacañang's alleged delay in releasing City Hall's share in the VAT collection.

"We have not been given our share by the national government right from the start, and this is similar to the Internal Revenue Allotment which should be automatically released," Mayor Lito Atienza said.

Atienza has asked City Treasurer Liberty Toledo "to make strong representations" with the national government for the release of the City Hall's share in the VAT collection.

Atienza warned that, if the city would not get its share as soon as possible, "we might as well not collect VAT in Manila… and relieve consumers of this additional burden."

A press statement from the mayor's office said Manila has not received its share in the VAT collection since 1993. Worse, the national government has not even given City Hall a figure as to how much its share would be.

Atienza said that, because of the delay, Manila and other local government units have suffered setbacks in their budget and development planning.

Jerome Aning

3 cops wounded in hostage drama

By Christian V. Esguerra

THREE policemen were stabbed yesterday when a drug addict, who had been relieved from his job, took hostage a 17-year-old boy for almost 10 hours in Malabon.

SPO1 Reynald Lim, PO2 Domingo Valerio, and PO1 Charlie de Guzman of the Malabon Mobile Police Unit suffered stab wounds on the arms after suspect Severino Cania, 35, attacked them.

Victim Patrick Cruz was playing cards with two other companions in a house in Taniong, Malabon when the suspect, apparently high on drugs, arrived to watch the game at 12:10 p.m., police said.

After Cruz's friends left, the suspect suddenly grabbed the victim by the shirt and poked a 9-inch fan knife at his neck, investigation showed.

Police said the suspect could have been depressed after he lost his job at the Navotas fish port.

For still unknown reasons, residents reported the hostage-taking only eight hours after it had started.

Malabon Police tried to convince Cania to surrender, but the suspect refused. He said he wanted to negotiate only with a certain Delia, said to be the owner of the house where the victim was staying.

While Delia was talking with Cania, the victim kicked him and ran outside the house, police said.

The hostage-taker also burst out, ran berserk, and stabbed the police officers.

PO2 Valerio shot the suspect on the leg, which put an end to the 10-hour hostage drama.

ERIK ARAZAS

P4 MILLION BUST

Malaysians Tai Teck Cheong, Lee Chi Ming and Tan Boon Sim appear to regret the day they engaged in the business of manufacturing and selling pirated video compact discs as National Bureau of Investigation head Director Reynaldo Wycoco (seated) holds up one of the illegal movie VCDs. NBI agents seized about 60,000 pirated VCDs worth P4 million from the Malaysians at their Quezon City residence on Tuesday.

Ma dies to save . . .

(From page A17)

The victim Julieta Otto, a resident of 4 Abad St., Signal Village, Taguig, died from wounds caused by an Armalite rifle.

She was pronounced dead on arrival at the Pasig Medical Center.

The victim's husband and assailant, 45-year-old Luminog Otto, escaped after the incident that took place in the couple's residence in Taguig around 9 p.m.

He is now the subject of a manhunt.

PO2 Jun Rene Obico, Taguig municipal homicide investigator, said the victim tried to embrace her daughter in a bid to save her from her father's wrath.

Obico revealed that, based on his investigation, the suspect was beating his 15-year-old daughter after she refused to have a sexual relationship with him.

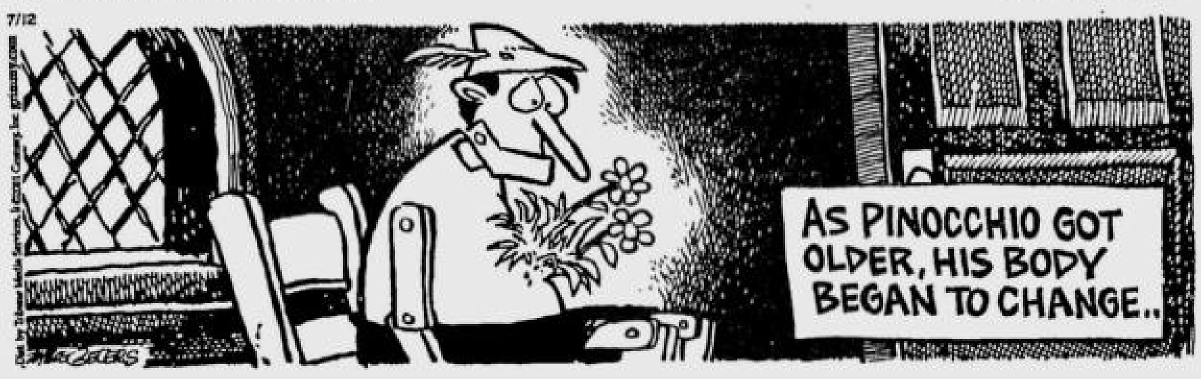
The victim was tightly embracing her daughter when the suspect took the Armalite rifle, shot his own wife and then fled on foot.

Obico added that the suspect was apparently courting his own daughter.

Obico said parricide charges would be filed against the suspect before the local government prosecutor's office.

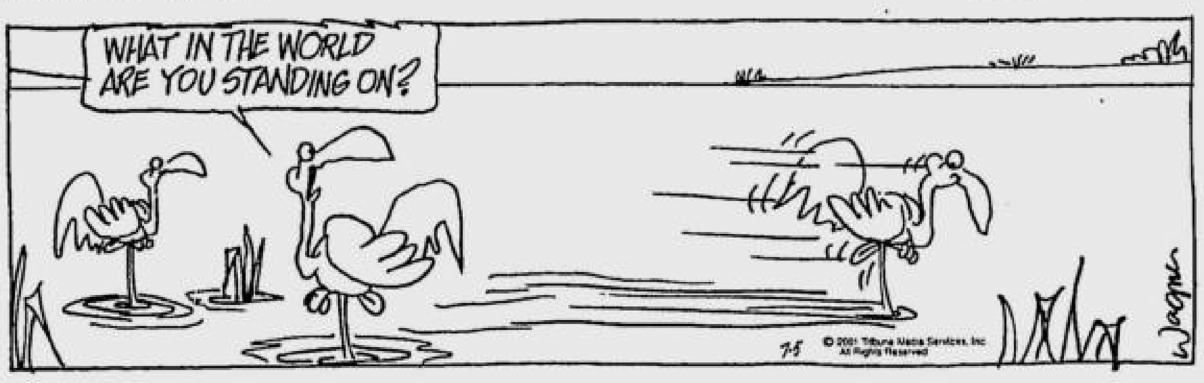
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


7/12
AS PINOCCHIO GOT OLDER, HIS BODY BEGAN TO CHANGE..
PETERS

ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU STANDING ON?
7-5
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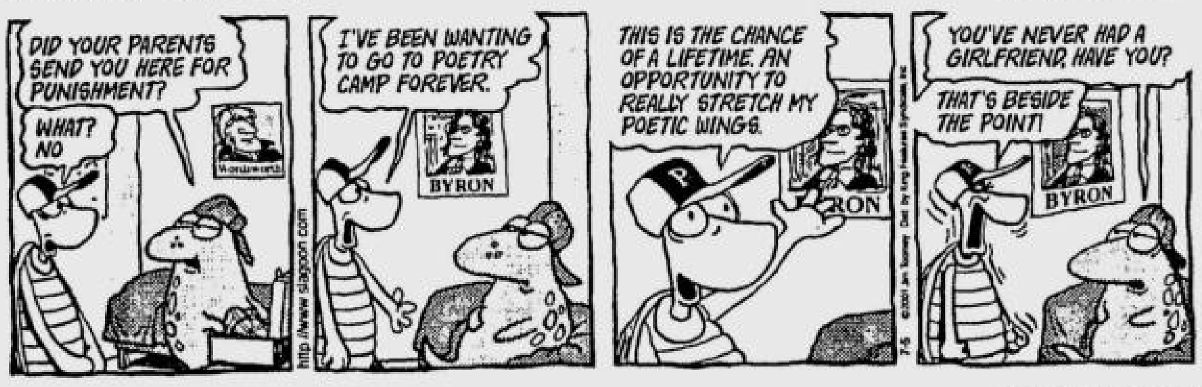
Wagner

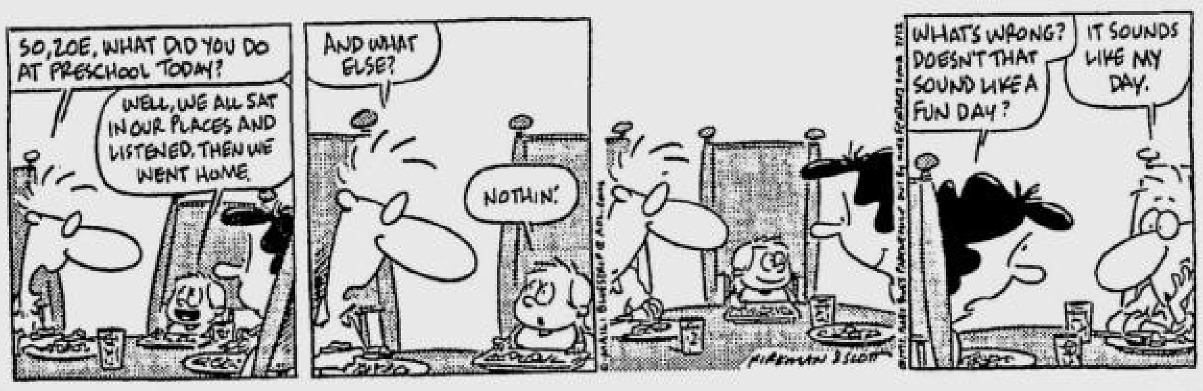
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


DID YOUR PARENTS SEND YOU HERE FOR PUNISHMENT?
WHAT? NO
Wordsworth
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO GO TO POETRY CAMP FOREVER.
BYRON
http://www.slagoon.com
THIS IS THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME. AN OPPORTUNITY TO REALLY STRETCH MY POETIC WINGS.
RON
YOU'VE NEVER HAD A GIRLFRIEND, HAVE YOU?
THAT'S BESIDE THE POINT!
BYRON
7-5

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SO, ZOE, WHAT DID YOU DO AT PRESCHOOL TODAY?
WELL, WE ALL SAT IN OUR PLACES AND LISTENED. THEN WE WENT HOME.
AND WHAT ELSE?
NOTHIN'.
WHAT'S WRONG? DOESN'T THAT SOUND LIKE A FUN DAY?
IT SOUNDS LIKE MY DAY.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Whitney Houston, Melanie Griffith, Sam Elliot, Gillian Anderson, Deion Sanders

Happy Birthday: Your unique style will help attract attention and get some of your ideas off the ground. The more enthusiastic you are, the better. If your time is well-organized, reaching your goals will be no problem. Initiate more to strengthen your position. You are a leader, not a follower. Your numbers: 3, 17, 21, 34, 40, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't draw too much attention to yourself at work. Physical activity will ease frustration. Plan to get together with someone special later in the day.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Jealous co-workers may try to sabotage your attempts to get ahead. Ferret out information that will hold them responsible. You can win if you're up-front with your boss.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Be a social butterfly and enjoy yourself today. Don't let anyone confine you or curtail your freedom. Use those great ideas to follow your own dreams.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Emotional confusion will cause you to make wrong decisions concerning your personal life. Overindulgent people will cause disruptions.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Emotional relationships will be plentiful if you attend group activities. Your outgoing, assertive nature will attract someone you've been anxious to meet. Don't settle for less than the best.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take care of any pressing medical problems that you or a parent may be suffering from. You will be subject to pushy individuals if you get involved in dubious organizations.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): A lover will be difficult, so sign him or her up for demanding activities. Look out for those wanting to cause a disagreement. You should sign up for creative courses.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Concentrate on your work. Someone in a higher position is observing how busy you are. Refuse to get involved in idle chatter; it will only make you look bad.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Check out the possibilities today. You don't have to make a commitment, so enjoy yourself while pondering the possibilities. After all, lots of research and well-thought-out plans bring the best results.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your personal life will be disrupted if you have been too busy with business. Try to make amends by planning a nice dinner for two. Compromise may be necessary.

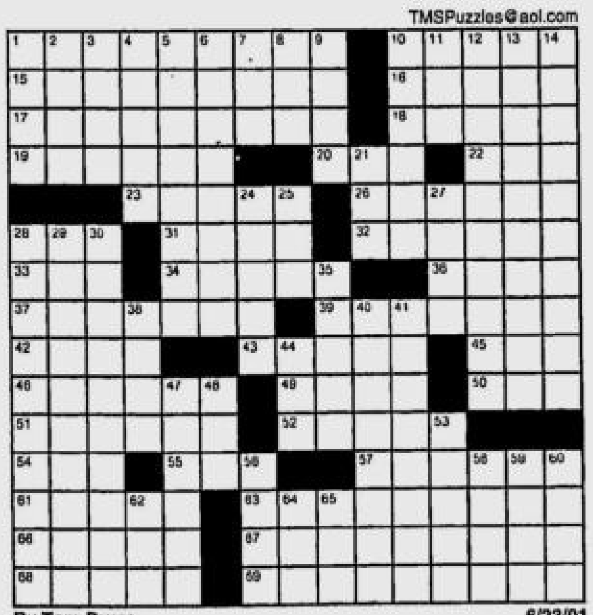
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): To complain about the current injustice would result in disaster. Hold on, and your time will come. For now, just do the best you can.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your wonderful ideas should bring in extra money. Present your plans to those who can offer financial support.

Birthday Baby: You'll be off to the races and hard to keep up with. You are dramatic and persuasive, easily convincing others to do things for you. You are clever, sensitive and family oriented.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL

6/23/01

ACROSS
1 Prince of India
10 Smell
15 Tear up by the roots
16 Tennille and Morrison
17 Professional copyist
18 Buck of country music
19 Try for a date
20 Forbid
22 Quilters' gathering
23 Bangs shut
26 Go by once again
28 High mountain
31 Ornamental case
32 Depends on
33 Joey of the twist
34 Earth
36 Warfare preceder
37 Williams or Redgrave
39 Sleuth
42 St. crossers
43 Greene of "Bonanza"
45 Du Maurier's "Jamaica __"
46 Annoy
49 Umps' cohorts
50 Vietnamese holiday
51 Of part of a foot
52 Beauty's mate?
54 King lead-in
55 Rent-sign abbr.
57 Mrs. Ferdinand Marcos
61 Some ancient Europeans
63 Procedure
66 Juan's winter month
67 Presage
68 City on the Meuse
69 Consciousness

DOWN
1 City near Phoenix
2 Circle segments
3 Hear me!
4 Spanish goodbye
5 Miniature streams
6 Synthetic fibers
7 Stenerud or Steen
8 Chowed down
9 Band leader Alpert
10 One who makes amends
11 Spat
12 Single
13 Italian vegetable soup
14 Evaluation
21 Fine work
24 "The Last Supper," for example
25 Military address
27 Snub-nosed dogs
28 Edges
29 Ignore
30 Pierced
35 Think alike
38 Guessed figs.
40 Less just
41 Military dining companion
44 Globe
47 "The Far Side" cartoonist
48 Stately tree
53 Grand __ National Park
56 Seat for several
58 Be fond of
59 Accomplishes
60 Sheridan and Miller
62 Danger zone letters
64 Mil. captive
65 Time period

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

K	A	T	E		M	A	T	E	D		B	R	A	S
G	L	A	D		E	L	O	P	E		R	E	N	E
B	A	L	E		A	T	R	I	A		A	C	N	E
		K	N	I	G	H	T	C	R	A	W	L	E	R
L	A	B		R	E	O			L	U	N	A	T	E
A	B	I	D	E	R		M	A	Y	S		I	T	S
W	A	G	O	N	L	O	A	D			A	M	E	S
			D	E	Y	T	R	A	D	E	R			
G	R	E	Y			T	I	M	E	C	A	R	D	S
R	E	P		B	P	O	E		A	L	B	A	N	Y
O	R	A	T	O	R			R	D	A		T	A	M
M	O	U	R	N	I	N	G	A	F	T	E	R		
M	U	L	E		M	A	M	B	A		M	A	L	I
E	T	E	S		A	V	A	I	L		I	C	E	S
T	E	T	S		L	E	N	D	L		T	E	E	M

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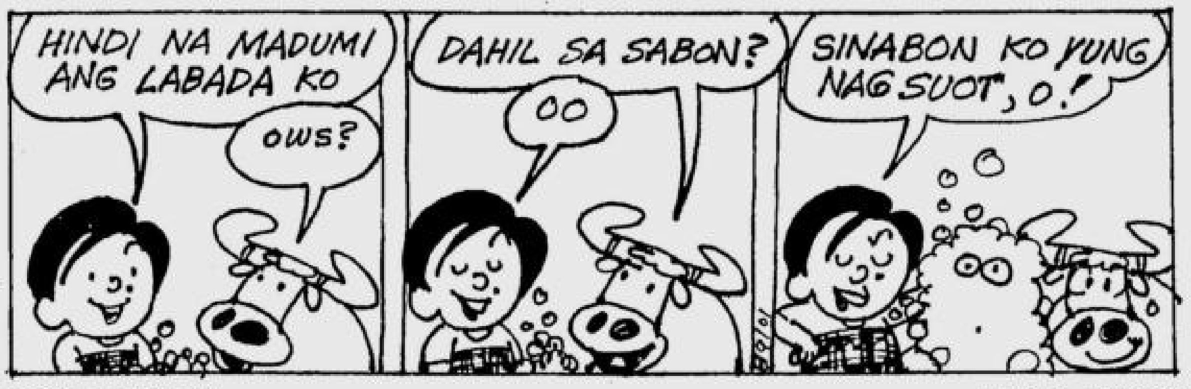
6/23/01

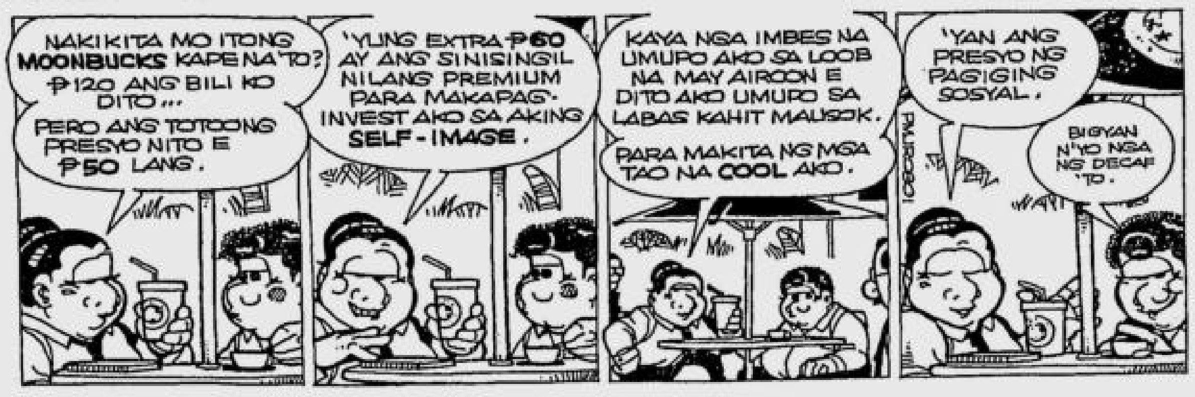
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


HINDI NA MADUMI ANG LABADA KO
OWS?
DAHIL SA SABON?
OO
SINABON KO YUNG NAG SUOT, O!

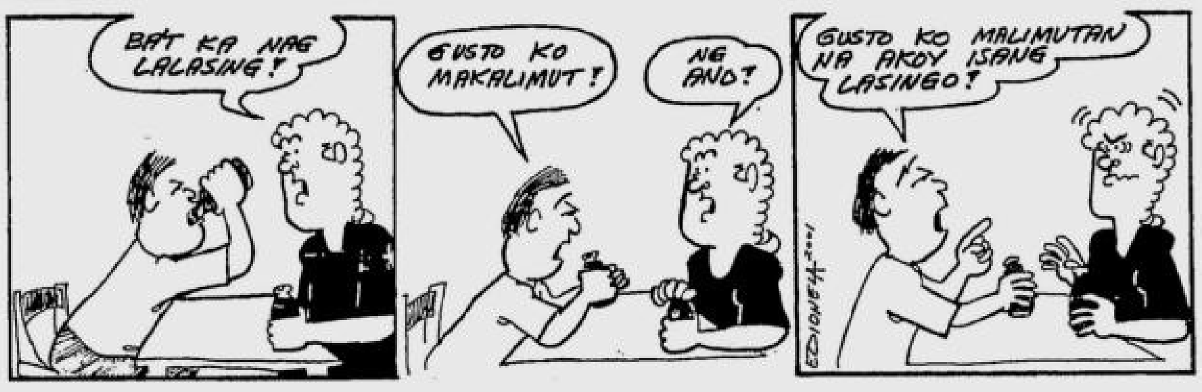
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAKIKITA MO ITONG MOONBUCKS KAPE NA 'TO? ₱120 ANG BILI KO DITO...
PERO ANG TOTOONG PRESYO NITO E ₱50 LANG.
'YUNG EXTRA ₱60 AY ANG SINISINGIL NILANG PREMIUM PARA MAKAPAG-INVEST AKO SA AKING SELF-IMAGE.
KAYA NGA IMBES NA UMUPO AKO SA LOOB NA MAY AIRCON E DITO AKO UMUPO SA LABAS KAHIT MAUSOK.
PARA MAKITA NG MGA TAO NA COOL AKO.
P.M.JR.
'YAN ANG PRESYO NG PAGIGING SOSYAL.
BIGYAN N'YO NGA NG DECAF 'TO.

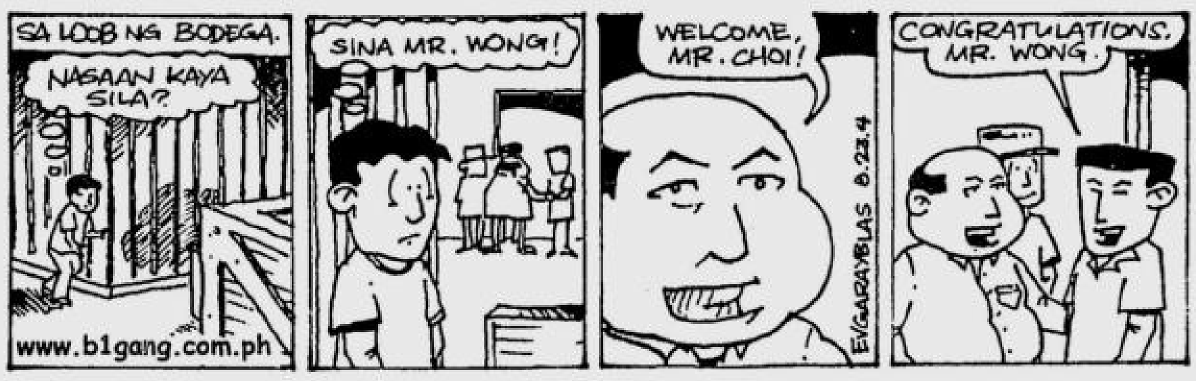
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


BAT KA NAG LALASING?
GUSTO KO MAKALIMUT!
NG ANO?
GUSTO KO MALIMUTAN NA AKOY ISANG LASINGO?
EDIONELA 2001

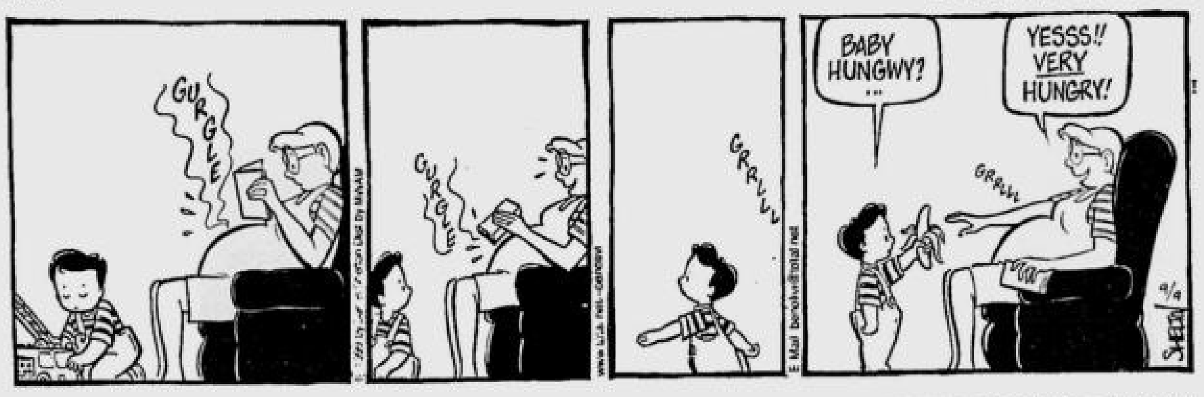
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


SA LOOB NG BODEGA.
NASAAN KAYA SILA?
www.b1gang.com.ph
SINA MR. WONG!
WELCOME, MR. CHOI!
EVGARAYBLAS 8.23.4
CONGRATULATIONS. MR. WONG.

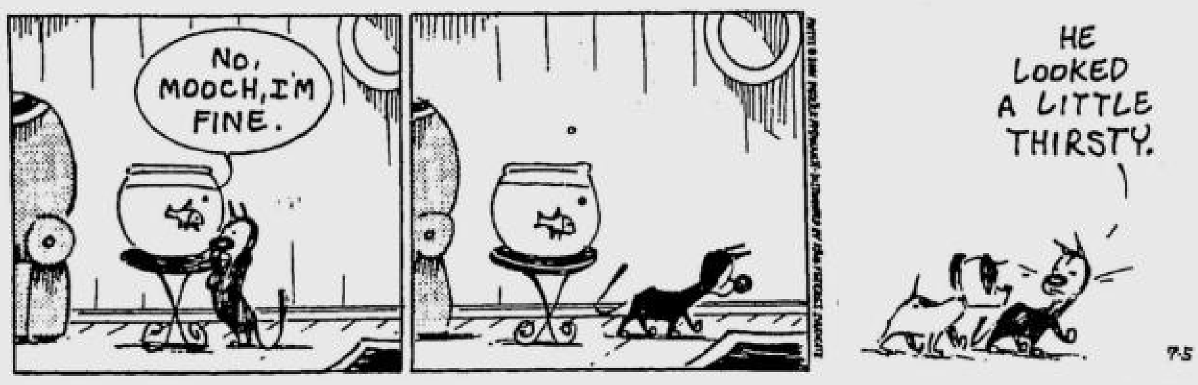
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GURGLE
GURGLE
GRRUUU
BABY HUNGWY? ...
YESSS!! VERY HUNGRY!
GRRUUU
9/4
SHELTON

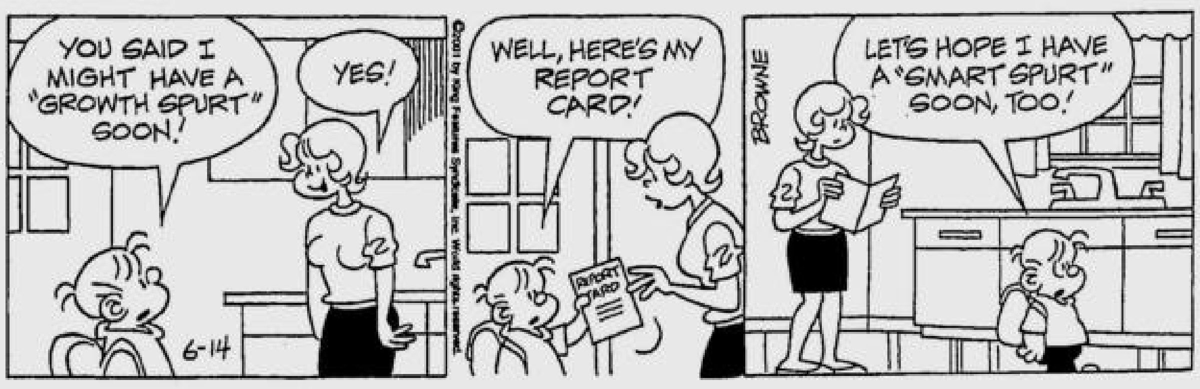
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


NO, MOOCH, I'M FINE.
HE LOOKED A LITTLE THIRSTY.
7-5

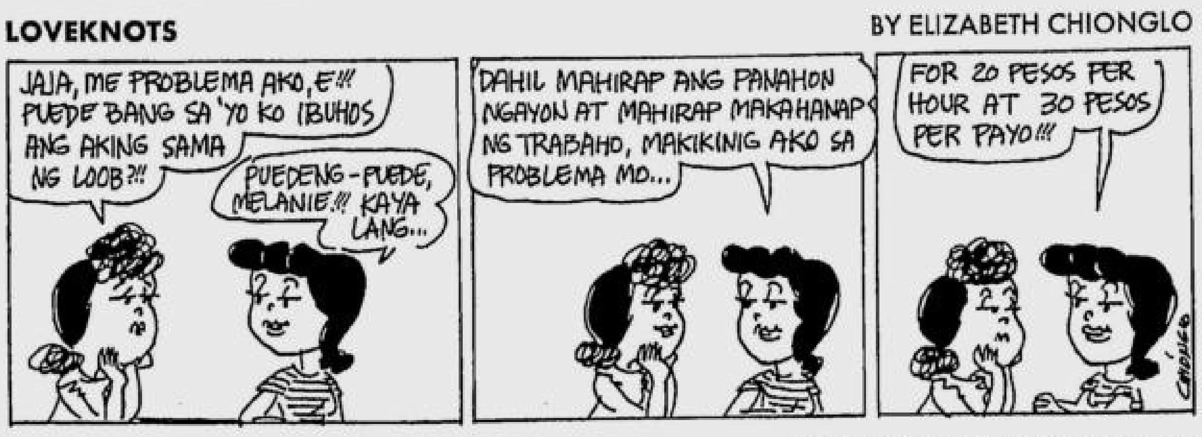
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


YOU SAID I MIGHT HAVE A "GROWTH SPURT" SOON!
YES!
6-14
WELL, HERE'S MY REPORT CARD!
REPORT CARD
BROWNE
LET'S HOPE I HAVE A "SMART SPURT" SOON, TOO!

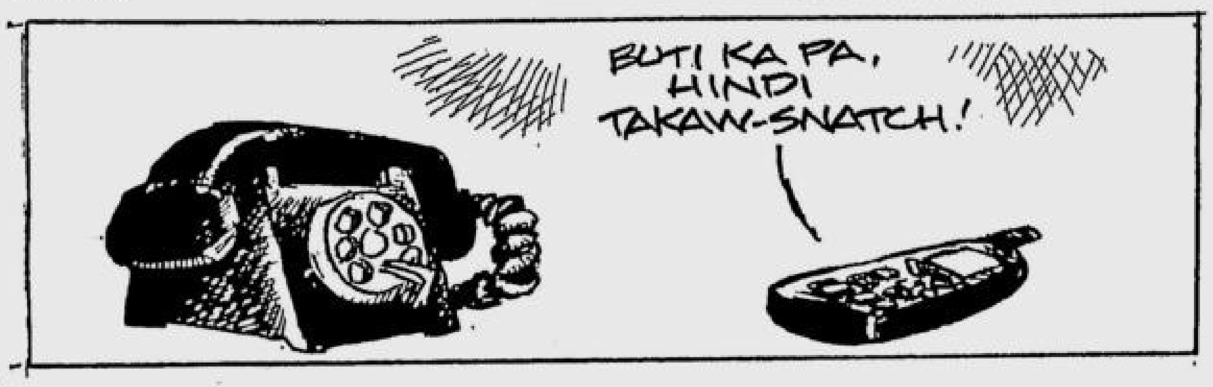
LOVEKNOTS

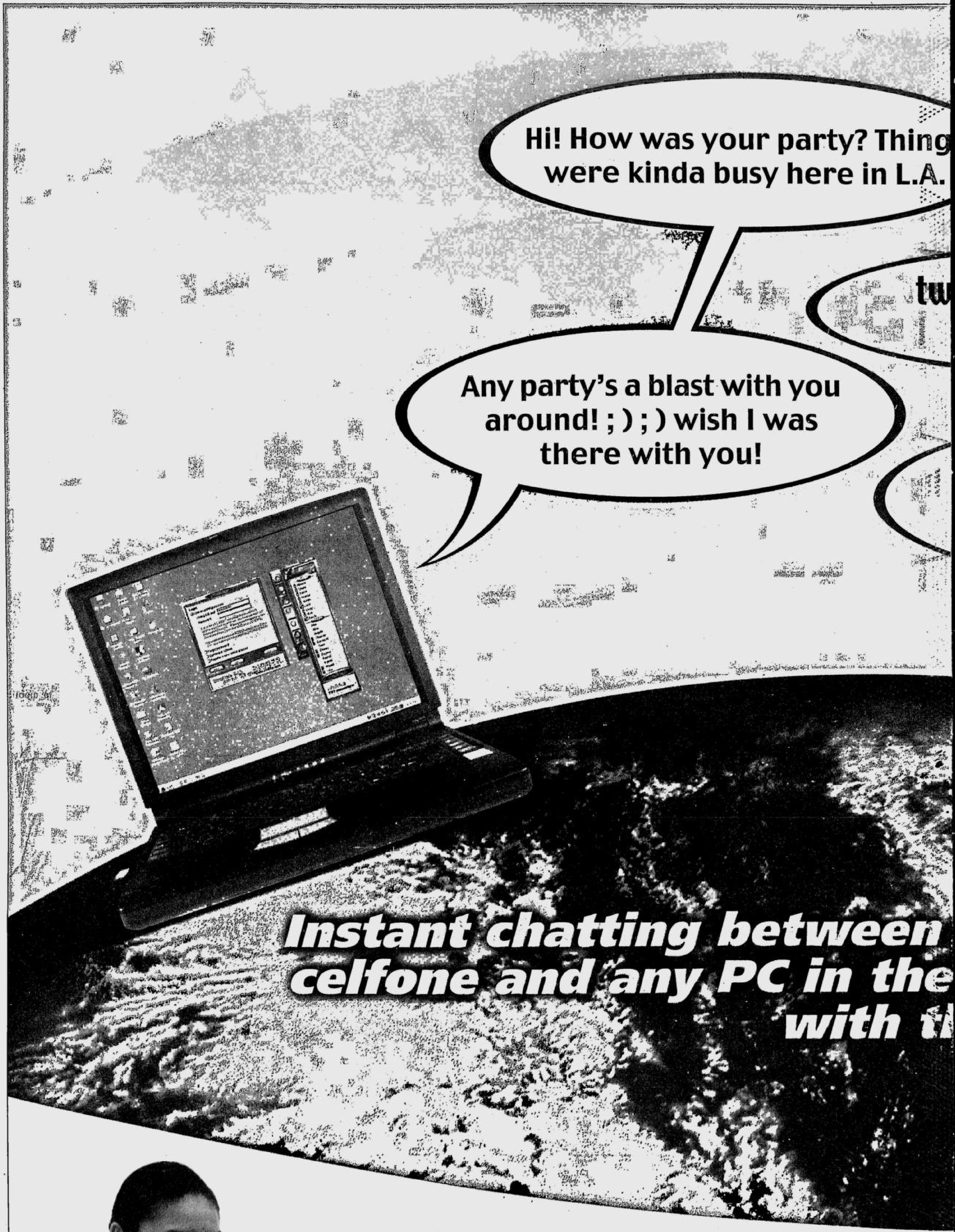
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, ME PROBLEMA AKO, E!!! PUEDE BANG SA 'YO KO IBUHOS ANG AKING SAMA NG LOOB?!!
PUEDENG-PUEDE, MELANIE!!! KAYA LANG...
DAHIL MAHIRAP ANG PANAHON NGAYON AT MAHIRAP MAKAHANAP NG TRABAHO, MAKIKINIG AKO SA PROBLEMA MO...
FOR 20 PESOS PER HOUR AT 30 PESOS PER PAYO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


BUTI KA PA, HINDI TAKAW-SNATCH!



Hi! How was your party? Thing
were kinda busy here in L.A.
tw
Any party's a blast with you around! ;) ;) wish I was there with you!
Instant chatting between
celfone and any PC in the
with t

chikka™
TXT messenger

**Start a chat fever! Create your own glob
community of SMART celfone and PC bu**

SMART i-chat combines the power of text messaging and instant PC messaging! With SMART i-chat, chatting is as easy as texting!

- Connect to buddies anytime, a
- All you need is your SMART c
  No need for ISPs or PCs to co
- Get instant, real-time messagi

This service is available on:

SMART GOLD GSM

SMART Buddy Pre-paid

SMART to PC messages will be charged P2.50 each.

s
as fun! u wud'v lykd it. :)
hahaha i'l jst txt u my party adventurs! ü
your
world
he new
SMART
i-chat

al cybertext
ddies in a few clicks!

nywhere!
elfone.
onnect to other PCs!
[illegible]

SMART i-chat—text messaging, all ways, always.
Get connected with SMART i-chat now!

Register with your SMART celfone now by typing ICHAT and sending to 277. To register thru PC, visit **www.chikka.com** for free downloads.

SMART
Simply Amazing!

SMART i-chat 'Anytime, anywhere' instant messaging

SMART GSM celfone subscribers can now easily send messages back and forth to PC-based instant messaging (IM) service users anytime, anywhere in the world using a new Philippine-made IM service called "Chikka".

Offered by SMART Communications, Inc., in cooperation with Chikka, the new service is a creative combination of two of today's most popular communications technologies—instant messaging which runs on the Internet and text messaging of GSM cellular phones.

"This new and innovative service enables SMART GSM celfone users here in the Philippines to connect real-time with their friends, relatives and associates here and all over the world through their Internet-linked PCs," said Anastacio Martirez, head of SMART's Personal Communications and Mobile Services Division.

The SMART i-chat service with Chikka is similar to the freeware service provided by traditional PC IMs such as America OnLine's Instant Messenger, Yahoo! Instant Messenger and ICQ. SMART i-chat allows real-time messaging not only from PC to mobile phones but also from mobile phones to PCs.

"It can also forward messages sent to the PC to the mobile phone, " said Dennis Mendiola, CEO of Chikka Holdings Ltd, the content provider for Chikka.

"With this service, mobile phone users will have the brand new experience of receiving messages zipping through the Internet from any PC in the world. They then text back as they ordinarily would," he added.

To avail of this service, the subscriber can easily register through his celfone. He only sends the word ICHAT to 277 and a menu of options (including option 1 for the registration) will be sent back to him. Then, he only has to reply to the series of instructions via text. For the PC user, he can visit **www.chikka.com** and download the free Chikka application. Then, he only has to follow the succeeding instructions for the installation and registration. After registering, he can now create a list of friends, family and business associates he wishes to communicate with. Like other instant messaging services, the list of "buddies" will be asked via text or e-mail if they wish to join the user's circle of contacts. If they agree, then they can receive and send messages to the user real-time.

SMART i-chat then uses this list to find the user's friends, and notifies him once they have logged on to the Net or used their celfones. He can then send messages and "chat" in real time.

"This is particularly useful to those people who are on the go and need constant communication with people abroad—be it in the US, Europe or the Middle East," said Martirez.

SMART i-chat service fits the current Philippine setting where Filipinos have few computers but lots of text-capable cellular phones.

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR 4173868

1	CATS & DOGS
2	MOULIN ROUGE
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	THE ANIMAL
5	KISS OF THE DRAGON
6	RADYO
7	RED DIARIES
8	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

SM CENTERPOINT 7149532 -7161416

1	RADYO
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	THE ANIMAL
4	CATS & DOGS
5	KISS OF THE DRAGON
6	TOM CATS
7	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
8	MOULIN ROUGE
9	RED DIARIES
10	PANGAKO IKAW LANG

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	TURN ON
2	MOULIN ROUGE
3	CATS & DOGS
4	THE ANIMAL
5	RADYO
6	JURASSIC PARK 3
7	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
9	RED DIARIES
10	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
11	SWORD FISH
12	DUDURUGIN KO PATI MO

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4	THE ANIMAL
5	CATS & DOGS
6	THE ANIMAL
7	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
8	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
9	RADYO
10	TOM CATS
11	RED DIARIES
12	KISS OF THE DRAGON

SM MEGAMALL 6331001 • 6329401

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	MOULIN ROUGE
3	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4	THE ANIMAL
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	CATS & DOGS
7	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
8	SWORD FISH
9	RADYO
10	KISS OF THE DRAGON
11	RED DIARIES
12	PANGAKO IKAW LANG

SM TUTUBAN 2514302

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	THE ANIMAL
3	RED DIARIES
4	RADYO

DTS DIGITAL SOUND · DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9205452

1	THE ANIMAL
2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
3	RADYO
4	RED DIARIES
5	CATS & DOGS
6	MOULIN ROUGE
7	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	KISS OF THE DRAGON
9	SWORD FISH
10	RADYO
11	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
12	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888

1	CATS & DOGS
2	RED DIARIES
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	TURN ON
6	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
7	RADYO
8	THE ANIMAL
9	JURASSIC PARK 3
10	MOULIN ROUGE

SM GUADALUPE COMM'L 8820915

1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	RADYO

SM CEBU 2313616

1	CATS & DOGS
2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
3	CITY OF SINS
4	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
5	RED DIARIES
6	DRIVEN
7	JURASSIC PARK 3

SM ILOILO 3209432

1	ONE NIGHT AT MC COOL'S
2	CLOSED
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	CITY OF SINS
6	TOM CATS
7	CLOSED
8	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	TOM CATS
4	PARU PARONG LIGAW
5	RED DIARIES
6	RADYO

SM SUCAT 8204975

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	THE ANIMAL
3	RADYO
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

SM DAVAO

1
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5
6

SOON TO OPEN
6 STATE-OF-THE-ART
MOVIE THEATERS

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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GLORIETTA 1 (formerly QUAD)

1	RADYO
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	THE ANIMAL
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

GLORIETTA 4

1	MOULIN ROUGE	in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON	in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY THX	in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	THE TAO OF STEVE (Phil. Premiere) Art Film	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	CATS & DOGS	in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	THE ANIMAL	in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	JURASSIC PARK 3	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1	MOULIN ROUGE	in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY	in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	THE ANIMAL	in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	MARTIN NIEVERA LIVE! AUG.23 TO 25 9PM Onstage	

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY THX	in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	THE ANIMAL	in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	MOULIN ROUGE	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	CATS & DOGS	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	KISS OF THE DRAGON	in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	FINAL FANTASY
2 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
3 (DTS)	SWORD FISH
4 GOLD (DTS)	MOULIN ROUGE
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8 [illegible]	RED DIARIES
9 [illegible]	RADYO
10 [illegible]	CATS & DOGS

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
6 (DTS)	RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	THE ANIMAL
2 (DTS)	RESERVE
3	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	RADYO
2	THE ANIMAL
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	THE ANIMAL
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	RED DIARIES

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RED DIARIES
4	RADYO
5	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
6	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7	THE ANIMAL
8	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010/892.3349

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	RED DIARIES
2	JURASSIC PARK 3

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA
2	ACCIDENTAL SPY
3	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
A	INDECENT BEHAVIOR

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	THE ANIMAL
3	NIGHT JOB
4	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8508

1 (DOLBY)	RADYO
2	RED DIARIES
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	CATS & DOGS
6	MOULIN ROUGE
7 (DTS)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
8 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
9 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RADYO

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	RADYO
2	RED DIARIES
3	RADYO
4 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
5	RED DIARIES
6 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7 (DTS)	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
8	
9	

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK
2	RED DIARIES
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
4	RESERVE
5 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
6	RADYO
7 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8	RESERVE

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	RED DIARIES
2	RADYO
3 (DTS)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
5 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	RADYO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	RED DIARIES
Lords	RED DIARIES
Jennet	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	THE ANIMAL
3	RESERVE
4	RED DIARIES

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	RADYO
2	RED DIARIES
3	THE ANIMAL
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	THE ANIMAL

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	RADYO
2	THE ANIMAL
3	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

Berma
tel 879-2029 or 30

1	RADYO
2	DUDURUGIN KO . . .

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
3	RADYO
4	THE ANIMAL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
2	RADYO
3 (DTS)	THE ANIMAL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	CATS & DOGS
2 (DTS)	RADYO
3 (DOLBY)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4	THE ANIMAL

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) Tel. (049) 411-1146

1	RADYO
2 (DOLBY)	THE ANIMAL
3 (DTS)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4	CATS & DOGS

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	RED DIARIES
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
2	DUDURUGIN KO . . .
3	RED DIARIES
4 (DTS)	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE ANIMAL
2	RADYO
3 (DTS)	CATS & DOGS
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	RADYO
2	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
3	ANIMAL

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	RADYO
2	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
3	THE ANIMAL

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	
2	
3	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	TRAFFIC
2	CATS & DOGS
3	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
2	RADYO
3	RED DIARIES

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	CATS & DOGS
3	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
4	MOULIN ROUGE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	DRIVEN
3	DR. T & THE WOMEN
4 (DTS ES)	CATS & DOGS

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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GALLERIA
632-9115-16 / 633-7841 loc. 279

1 THX	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	CATS & DOGS
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	THE ANIMAL
6	THE ANIMAL
7	RED DIARIES
8	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
9	RADYO
10	MOULIN ROUGE

ERMITA
536-7808 TO 12

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
2	CATS & DOGS
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4	RADYO
5	RED DIARIES
6	THE ANIMAL
7	KISS OF THE DRAGON

NOVALICHES
935-3229 TO 31

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
2	THE ANIMAL
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	RED DIARIES
6	UNDER REGULAR CHECK UP
7	CATS & DOGS
8	UNDER REGULAR CHECK UP

IMUS
(046) 471-8188

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RADYO
3	THE ANIMAL
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	RED DIARIES

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453

1	DRIVEN
2	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
3	TOM CATS
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	ONE NIGHT AT MC COOL'S
6	DR. DOLITTLE

SOON TO OPEN
METRO EAST
SAN FERNANDO PAMPANGA
ILOILO

THX dts SDDS DOLBY DOLBY STEREO

SMART MONEY ACCEPTED AT ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD GALLERIA AND ERMITA.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	RED DIARIES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	RADYO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE ANIMAL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	CATS & DOGS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	RADYO
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	GATAS / TEMPTATION NIGHT
ODEON	RADYO
ODEON-2	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA
ROBEN	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
TANDEM-1	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
TANDEM-2	HILIG NG KATAWAN
TIMES	TRAFFIC / CAST AWAY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
QUEZON-1	BUKAS MAY LIGAYA
REMAR	RADYO
REMAR-2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-2	BRIDGIT JONE'S DIARY
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
CINEMA-2	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-3	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-6	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
CINEMA-7	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-8	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-12	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-14	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-15	RADYO
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-2	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-3	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-5	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-6	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	RESERVE
CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	UNDER COVER ANGEL
CINEMA-2	SUGAT SA PURI
CINEMA-4	WARAY

'Unang Pinoy' awards deadline

DUE to insistent demand from amateur and professional composers and lyricists who want their works to be included in the "Unang Pinoy Musika Awards," the deadline for submission of entries to the competition has been extended to Aug. 15.

This was announced by Mark Manalang, president of "Unang Pinoy" co-organizer Ultimate Entertainment, Inc. Manalang revealed the contest has attracted more musicians than they have expected.

"Unang Pinoy" is a nationwide search for songs that are inspired by or derived from the traditional and ethnic music of Filipinos. With lyrics that reflect positive Filipino values, the songs must appeal to the youth and should contribute to the young people's appreciation for the Filipino music.

Each entry must be well-crafted, original and must be performed acoustically. The songs' lyrics may be written in any native dialect and should mirror positive Filipino values, qualities and customs.

In addition, no entry should have been previously performed or played in public or entered in the finals of any songwriting contest here or abroad.

Ultimate Entertainment, the pioneer in musical events for TV, is organizing "Unang Pinoy," with Samba-Likhaan, a center for the performing and creative arts in Asia.

Only 12 entries will be selected for the grand finals, slated Sept. 28 at the AFP Theater in Camp Aguinaldo.

Interested parties may contact Ultimate Entertainment at 634-1720 or 634-1731. Or visit the office at Suite 715 Globe Telecom Plaza, Pioneer corner Madison st., Mandaluyong City.

Boyet, Sandy in TV drama

REAL-LIFE show biz couple Christopher de Leon and Sandy Andolong play expectant parents undergoing a family crisis in tonight's episode of "Maalaala Mo Kaya," 9:30 p.m. on ABS-CBN.

The couple reunite with their "Kakabakaba Ka Ba?" costar Charo Santos-Concio, who hosts the TV drama.

Ynez Veneracion also stars in the episode.

LOUIE'S CINEMA

THX It Will Change The Way You Hear and See Movies Forever

NOW SHOWING

BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
Comedy - Romance
(PG - 13 RT - 1:40)
Starring:
Renee Zellweger
Colin Firth
Hugh Grant

August 9 - Thursday
4:45 PM - Bridget Jone's Diary - Closed
6:55 PM - LRP Foundation / Warner Bros.
9:05 PM - LRP Foundation / Warner Bros.
11:15 PM - Bridget Jone's Diary

PLANET OF THE APES
opens Wednesday Aug. 15

GET a copy of the 4th issue of Pelikula! Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication. Special discounts given to Louie's THX members.

Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

NTWINE AT CONWAY'S BAR

Conway's Bar of Makati Shangri-La teems with great sound. For primetime entertainment, Ntwine renders pop, dance and ballads on Tuesdays. Mondays are upbeat with the music of Soul'd Out. Wednesdays are high-energy nights with the infectious sound of Origin, featuring vocalist Sesabeth with the famous Tina Turner impersonations. Rock and Roll takes centerstage on Thursdays as Spirit of '67 relives the music of Elvis Presley, Haley and The Comets and Beachboys. Check out Fridays with Big back to back with Music Making Company. Saturdays featured Channels on Aug. 11, Policy on Aug. 18 and Revive on Aug. 25. For inquiries, call 813-8888.

ELEMENTS AT SUBURBIA

Elements performs back-to-back with 7th Soul on Saturdays at Suburbia, which extends its party nights promo for all Saturdays of August. All guests are entitled to 50 percent discount on minimum consumable charge. Other bands who perform at Suburbia are Side A on Mondays and back to back with Ntwine on Wednesday, Pido With Take One on Tuesdays, Toy Symphony on Thursdays and Freeverse on Fridays with Escape (Aug. 10) and Playback (Aug. 17 and 24). Suburbia is at 1718 M. Adriatico st., Malate. For inquiries, call 450-1685 or 86.

Eraserheads sings at Padi's Mindave

SHOWS

THE ERASERHEADS will hold a special concert tonight at Padi's Mindave. The quartet of Ely Buendia, Marcus Adoro, Raymund Marasigan and Buddy Zabala will sing their past hits and cuts from their new album under BMG Records Pilipinas.

On Aug. 16, Parokya ni Edgar will perform at Padi's.

To commemorate the 105th anniversary of the "Cry of Pugadlawin" which ignited the Philippine revolution on Aug. 24, 1896, Freestyle will hold two special concerts at Padi's, Aug. 22 and 27.

Singer Anna Fegi also performs Aug. 30.

For inquiries, call 453-0080 or 414-4930 to 34.

Crossover launches CD collection

105.1 Crossover launches "The Greatest Crossover Classics" CD collection during the one-night concert of Side A band vocalist Joey Generoso, tonight at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental.

The CD released by MCA Universal, features an array of Crossover favorites, from Spyro Gyra to Jobim and Vanessa Williams to Will Downing.

Joey G is the latest guest artist in the monthly concert series, "Crossover Presents," which previously featured Regine Velasquez, Jaya, Lani Misalucha and Janno Gibbs.

Joining Joey G in the special show are the inimitable Jon Santos and vocal quartet The Opera.

Accompanying him are the country's top session musicians — Mel Villena, Bobby Taylo, Cesar Aguas and Roy Mercado — with Gerard Salonga as musical director.

"Crossover Presents" is not your usual concert series. It promotes a kind of entertainment that is original and rare.

Aside from his stint in "Crossover Presents" Joey G. will be in another Crossover show as he reunites with Side A on Aug. 23 for "Crossover Live" at Dish in Rockwell.

"Crossover Presents" Joey G. is presented by Shell-Citibank Gold Mastercard, Bayfresh and Stresstabs, with ING Life, Café Puro Jade Blend, Kumon Philippines and Maggi Cup Sarap.

To win free invitations, listen to 105.1 Crossover or call Ticketworld at 891-5610 or Captain's Bar at 750-8888 for ticket inquiries.

PARK AVENUE AT PLEASURE ISLAND

Park Avenue topbilled the 7th anniversary party last night of Pleasure Island, an exclusive KTV bar and musiclounge in Makati. Music People also performed live during the event. Pleasure Island is located at 2079 Edison Street, Buendia, Makati. Call 844-3139 or 844-7929.

Argentinian . . .

(From page A24)

ries "Chiquititas," where he played dual roles.

"Chiquititas" made Facu internationally famous, but it wasn't until he played Ivo in "Muñeca Brava (Wild Angel)" that his career really took off.

"Muñeca Brava" became the highest-rating program ever on Argentinian TV and is now being aired in more than 20 countries around the world.

Because of his success in "Muñeca Brava," Facu has become popular. The tall, sexy and good-looking actor regularly appears on the covers of top magazines in South America and other countries around the world.

How does he feel about his success? In an interview, Facu said he is very grateful to all the viewers of "Muñeca Brava" who have made him and the series a success.

"I'm very thankful. What else can I ask for? Of course, I feel a bit puzzled by all this success and I'm kind of shy and timid, but it is an honor and a big responsibility. I owe it to the audience to give them my best in my work."

Aside from Facu, the other actors playing important roles in "Muñeca Brava" – aired on local TV as "Monica Brava" – are Diego Ramos as Sergio, Arturo Maly as his father Federico di Carlo, Norberto Diaz as Damian, Pablo Novak as Bobby, Marcelo Mazarella as Ramon, Osvaldo Guidi as Pablo, and Segundo Cernalas as Pablo.

The series' most thrilling moments are reserved for Facu's scenes with his equally sexy leading lady, Natalia Oreiro, who plays the title role in "Monica Brava."

The series airs Mondays to Fridays, 8 p.m. on GMA 7.

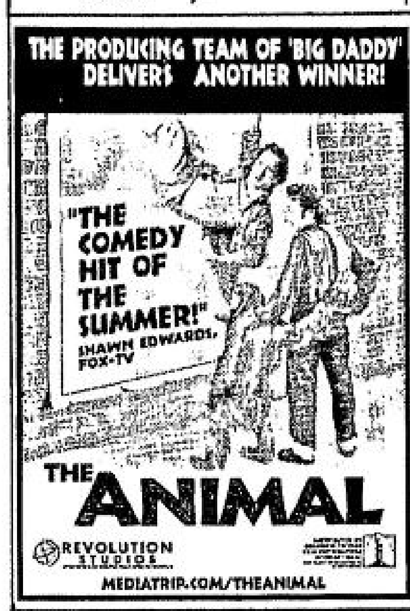
Hotdog back after successful US tour

HOTDOG, led by main man Rene Garcia, is back in town after wowing Filipino-American audiences in their US concert tour.

The band, which popularized the Manila sound, regaled audiences with their classic hits like "Pers Lab," "Ikaw ang Miss Universe ng Buhay Ko," "Manila," "Annie Batungbacal" and more.

The group's first concert was held at Hunter's Auditorium in Manhattan, produced by Odie and Dina Maningas. With singer-songwriter David Pomeranz as guest, Hotdog entertained the Filipinos in the Big Apple with a mixed repertoire of original compositions and '70s rock hits, including Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction," Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze" and Paul McCartney's "Silly Love Songs," among others.

In Washington, a show mounted by Eastmark International Productions, Hotdog performed with Giselle Toengi and brought the house down with such hits as "O, Lumapit Ka," "Pers Lab" and "Beh Buti Nga."



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

THE PRODUCING TEAM OF 'BIG DADDY' DELIVERS ANOTHER WINNER!
"THE COMEDY HIT OF THE SUMMER!" SHAWN EDWARDS, FOX-TV
THE ANIMAL
REVOLUTION STUDIOS
MEDIATRIP.COM/THEANIMAL

Schneider, 'ANIMAL': Hayop sa katatawanan

Rob Schneider, lovable Filipino star of the comedy hit DEUCE BIGALOW MALE GIGOLO is back, funnier than ever in Columbia Pictures' THE ANIMAL.

As Marvin Mange, he has the strength of a lion, the agility of a chimpanzee and the affections of... a goat?

Thanks to a life-saving experimental surgery that fuses his body with animal parts, Marvin's dreams of becoming a cop like his dad come true. Armed with new bulging muscles and a keen sense of smell, he even becomes a police hero, as he saves a drowning boy and sniffs out drug smugglers at the airport.

But complications arise when he starts falling for Rianna (Colleen Haskell, *Survivor*), an animal shelter volunteer. Will he finally be able to control his beastly ways with the woman he loves?

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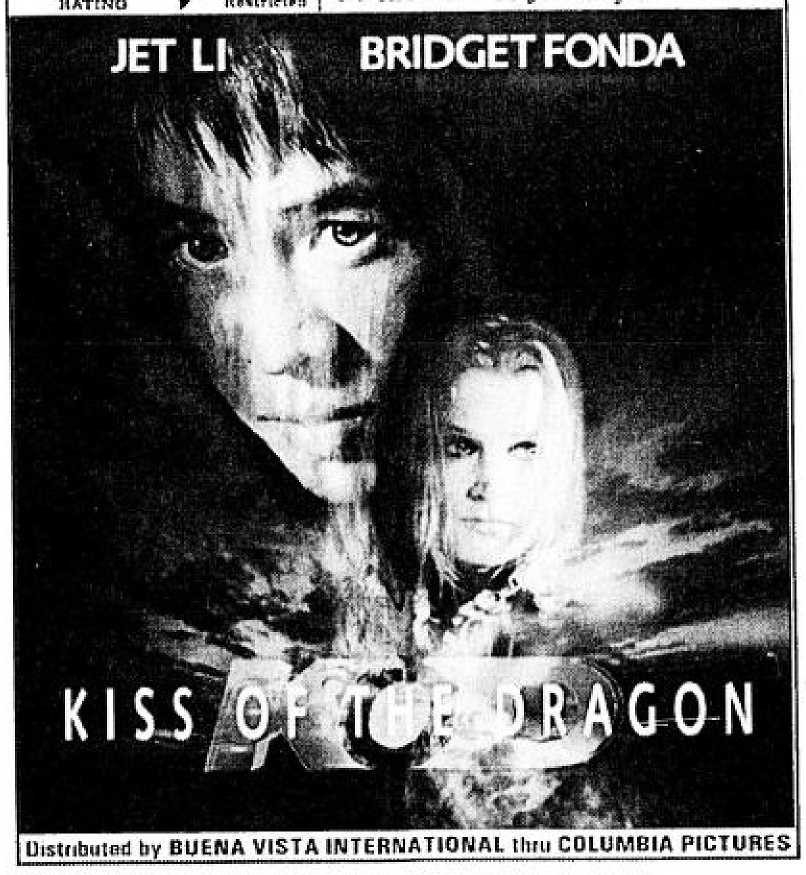

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KISS OF THE DRAGON - R 18 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	JURASSIC PARK 3 - P 13 11:25, 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY - P 13 11:20, 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10

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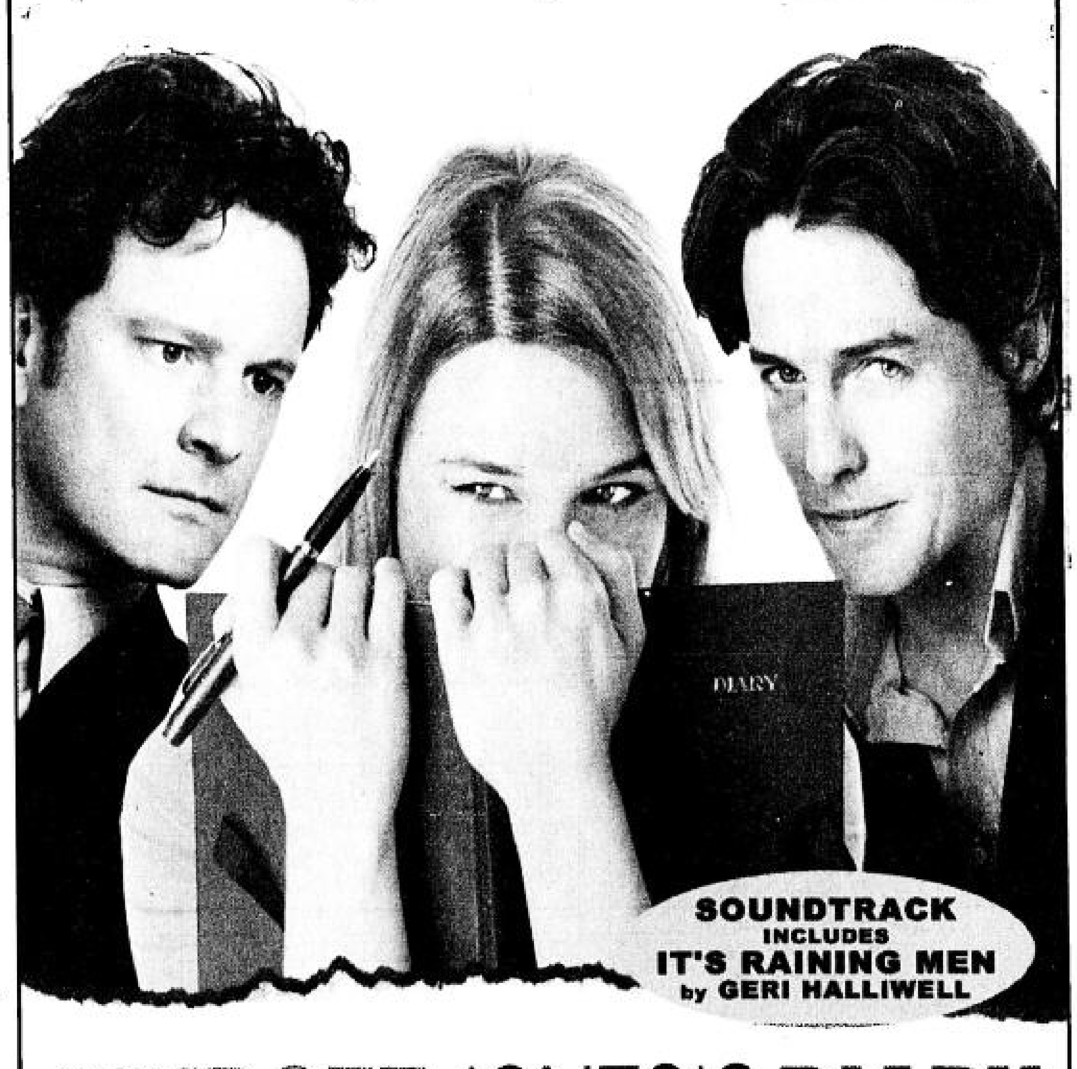

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
The film contains language which young audiences may find disturbing.
Parents and guardians are strongly cautioned against bringing children 13 years and below.
Renée Zellweger Hugh Grant Colin Firth
SOUNDTRACK INCLUDES IT'S RAINING MEN by GERI HALLIWELL
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OPEN: 9:00 P.M. - LFS
(Normal Operation) (Last Full Show)
However, Cinemas 5 & 6 will be OPEN the whole day, from 10:15 A.M. to LFS (Last Full Show).
Sorry for the Inconvenience. The Management.
Saturday, 11 August 2001 - normal operations resumes.

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Two stage productions for Lea

WHAT'S Lea Salonga up to these days? Aside from her US TV soap, she's slated to play the oriental ingenue lead in the delightful musical, "The Flower Drum Song," which will be mounted anew at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles starting October.

Lea's character, the "picture bride" Mei Li, gets to sing a number of lovely tunes like "A Hundred Million Miracles" that are just right for her fine, high, melodic voice, so we expect her to be a hit in the show.

Incidentally, "The Flower Drum Song" is closely identified with Filipino performer. While the role of Mei Li was essayed in the film version by Miyoshi Umeki, it has been played onstage by a number of our best female singers – Cely Carillo on Broadway, and Maureen Tiongco in the hit musical's national touring company.

In the '60s, Tiongco came home to star in the first local staging of the show, to great acclaim.

Lea's performance in the LA revival should be similarly well-received.

After "The Flower Drum Song" ends its limited run, Lea will come home to act in a dramatic play, "Proof," starting early next year. The play has won Pulitzer and Tony awards for its exciting excursions into the mysteries of love – and mathematics!

These are good projects, but Lea would really be making a major contribution to the Philippine theater scene if she starred in an original Filipino musical.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

This is something that she should have done years ago: lend her talent and audience appeal to the popularization of the Filipino musical, which for many decades has had to fight against the colonial mentality behind the popularity here of imported shows like, yes, "Miss Saigon."

Feedback

THANKS to Susan Custodio for these Boob-tube booboos that she's contributed:

TV reporter: *Talagang masaya itong parada ng mga litson. At siyempre, di mawawala pagkatapos ang libreng patikim ng mga nanonood na mga tao!*

(Correct form: "patikim sa mga nanonood...")

* * *

TV reporter: *Dahil sa nalalapit na bagyo, huwag ninyong kalimutan na padalhan ng mga anak ninyo ng* reindeer *sa pagpasok!*

(Correct form: "raingear.")

* * *

TV reporter: *Hindi maapektuhan ang* Luzon, Visayas at Mindanao *ng nalalapit na* weather depression, *kundi ng* I.T.C.Z. or "Intertropical Conversing Zone."

(Correct form: "Convergence Zone.").

TV treats

AT 9 TONIGHT on Star Movies, "The Thomas Crown Affair." Pierce Brosnan finds a new challenge in the person of feisty Rene Russo. When a priceless Monet is stolen, only Russo's character suspects Crown of the theft. In the dangerous game they play, only one can win.

Sunday, Aug. 12 at 9 p.m., "Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back."

Also at 9 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Return to Eden" is about a big experiment in Australia designed to eradicate feral cats and foxes, species introduced to the Australian ecosystem 200 years ago by European colonizers.

By killing off these predators, Project Eden aims to return the land to its native species, like the bilby and the woylie.

The show also introduces viewers to June Butcher and Kanyana, the animal haven where she lovingly cares for Australia's at-risk fauna, helping to bring them back from the brink of extinction.

Monday, Aug. 13 at 9 p.m. on Star Movies, "Mickey Blue Eyes" stars Hugh Grant as a man whose fiancee turns out to be the daughter of a powerful mobster.

Also at 9 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Maned Wolves" is about the largest member of the dog family living in South America.

Geneva Cruz laughs off pregnancy talk

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

THE funny thing about show biz is that once an actress gains weight, she is suspected to be pregnant, and when she slims down she is presumed to have had an abortion. People are always pregnant with such crazy thoughts.

The latest victim of such drivel is Geneva Cruz. But she just laughs off rumors though that she is pregnant with KC Montero's baby.

"I'm not pregnant," Geneva says. "It's my sister Aubrey who is expecting a baby. I'm too busy shooting two movies. I don't really have time for funny rumors like that."

I told her, "Yup! You're super sexy now. That's not the look of a pregnant woman!"

Gen chuckleed. "*Hay*! As my good friend Rachel Alejandro puts it, she has been pregnant 10 times in show biz but none of them were for real. KC just smiled when he heard about the rumor."

Rumors such as this makes Geneva want to lie low in the biz and try her luck abroad. "My whole family will migrate to the States late this year," she says. "I'm working on an international album so I'll stay in the States for a while early next year. Rachel plans to live in the US starting December. She's tired of the show biz system. I feel the same way sometimes. *Puro* diva *ek-ek lang ang* priority *dito*. Rachel and I want to prove something as Filipino artists."

I countered, "Don't you think that leaving for the States would make people suspect all the more that you're pregnant indeed?"

She sighs. "I've been through a lot in this biz already. I've reached a point where I don't care what people say about me anymore."

Atta girl! Not everyone's opinion matters, anyway. Why mind tongues that are unkind?

Nikki one of the boys

I ENJOYED watching the advance screening of "Bridget Jones' Diary" with Maribeth Bichara in the newly renovated Megamall Cinema. SM's amiable PR Lyka Ugarte invited us.

I could really relate to the movie. Just like Bridget, I'm thirty-something with a love life that seems like thirty-nothing. My weight gain is directly proportional to my loves lost. Enough said.

Before the movie started I asked Maribeth why she thinks Troy Montero fell for Nikki Valdez. Maribeth quipped, "Troy told me it's because Nikki is like one of the boys. When Troy wants to play billiards she joins him. She's game. Anything goes, and she's not the jealous type. She lets Troy have a boys' night out when he feels like it." I guess it's better to be one of the boys than be one of the toys.

Voice of the Philippines

SUNRISE Entertainment CO. is inviting all interested high school students, male or female, 14-16 years old, to join the "Voice of the Philippines 2001" nationwide search for singing stars.

Ten official representatives from GMA/Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will vie for the title. For details, call 632-7852 or visit Unit 727 Cityland Shaw Tower, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong.

Personal

MERCI beaucoup to Korina Sanchez for the wonderful book and most of all for the heartwarming dedication. Rest assured that between your smiles and frowns there will always be me.

For feedback, e-mail wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

'RADYO'

Thriller as satire

BY POCH CONCEPCION

REVIEW

FOR every crisis, an opportunity.

This is supposedly another bad year for the local movie industry, but what the heck. For the bright-eyed alumni of the Mowelfund film school, it may be the best time to show their stuff to a public much deprived of refreshing ways of making contemporary Pinoy flicks.

At the moment, Jon Red and Yam Laranas seem to be creating works that are worth seeing.

Opening today is "Radyo," a facetious look at the misery, anxiety, neurosis and catharsis of urban lives.

Laranas is credited with the story, shares the screenplay with Red, and handles both cinematography and direction. In short, he has full control of almost everything, except maybe the acting skills of the lead actress, which we will discuss later.

The plot is simple enough for the toiling masses to relate to. Lady X (Rufa Mae Quinto) is an AM radio announcer who keeps listeners glued to her early morning show through her wacky comments (advice to a love-struck seminarian) and toilet humor (sign-off spiel: "*Huwag isubo ang 'di kayang lunukin!*").

The sex-laced, on-air jokes between Miss X and her gay sidekick, George (RJ Leyran), keep the show running, until things turn sour over an innocent phone call from Ruben (Jeffrey Quizon), a regular-dude type who slips into a product-demo guy act in the mall for a living.

His on-air request for a song and personal dedication is rebuffed, as well as his romantic overtures toward his co-worker, which transforms his nerdy character into a dark figure with a murderous bent. This killer instinct is traced to a childhood trauma marked by physical pain and mental torture.

Ruben proceeds to snuff the living daylights of several targets: First, his snotty love prospect, then a party-animal friend of Lady X, a ravishing prostitute and a lust-driven George. Finally he zeroes in on Lady X.

It is this last attempt, a nook-and-cranny chase, which draws the familiar audience-shrieking-on-the-edge-of-their-seats scenario, which was quite evident in the advance screening at the UP Film Center.

Laranas has managed to craft an entertainment-driven film, even as he fails to squeeze a fair amount of creative characterization from Quinto. She has difficulty shaking off her Rufa Mae mannerisms, and we wonder if she spent time trying at least to observe how radio jocks do their thing. She was very effective, though, in delivering her station's call sign, DZYL 1010 ("Wan-O-Ten!").

It is Quizon who shines in his quirky acting, and we couldn't help notice the uncanny resemblance of his facial contortions to those of his legendary father.

"Radyo" is not without its share of weak signals from certain spots in the plot. We leave it to the viewer to discern them.

However, this is a film that matters, if only due to the technical flair and visual twist that Laranas applies to his camera work and absurd characters. You could die laughing at the way security guards, radio station owners, girl Fridays, cops and other folks are portrayed.

In the end, executive producer Vince del Rosario might have a chance of recouping Viva's investment, because "Radyo" is a satire that successfully masquerades as a thriller.

QUINTOS AND QUIZON. She can't shake off her Rufa Mae mannerisms, while he shines.

ARANA. Gained worldwide popularity because of "Monica Brava."

Argentinian hunk in 'Monica Brava'

EVERYONE knows how important leading men are to the success of a movie or TV series – and telenovelas are no exception. From Fernando Jose to Miguel (and everyone else in between) leading men are a big part of the reason why telenovelas have become so successful.

GMA 7 brings to the screens the hit Argentinian telenovela "Monica Brava" and with it, a new leading man to swoon over.

Facundo Arana plays Ivo, the son of wealthy couple Federico and Luisa di Carlo and the love interest of the series' lead star, Natalia Oreiro.

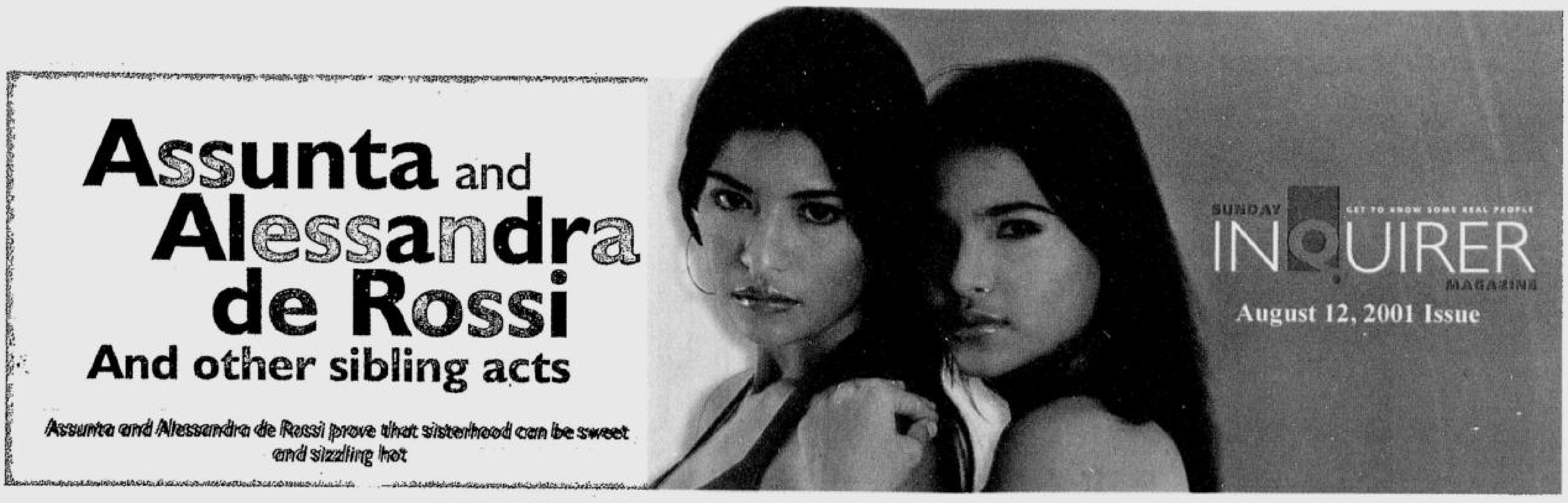
In the story, Ivo's and Monica's paths cross when they meet at a disco. By some strange twist of fate, Monica becomes a maid in the mansion of Ivo's family, in the process discovering deep, dark secrets about the Di Carlos clan and about the parents who abandoned her when she was a child.

Born Jorge Facundo Arana in March 1972 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Facu had a relatively uneventful childhood, but that all changed when he discovered he had cancer at age 17. He had to undergo 10 months of intensive treatment, followed by a series of medical tests over the next five years.

Facu, as he is known in Argentina, was playing his saxophone in a train station when he met Lito Espinosa, author of "Canto Rodado." It was Espinosa who was responsible for getting Facu cast in his first telenovela where, ironically, he played a man suffering from cancer.

In 1995, Facu landed the role of Leonardo in the telenovela "Perla Negra," starring Andrea del Boca and Gabriel Corrado. Two years later, he joined the cast of the se

ARGENTINIAN/A23



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IMF bucks shift in income tax system

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund is opposing the plan of the Macapagal administration to shift to a gross modified tax scheme, saying it may be more complicated and harder to implement.

However, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government would push to amend the Comprehensive Tax Reform Law, which imposes a net income tax of 32 percent for businesses and a gradually increasing tax rate for individuals earning at least P60,000 annually.

The IMF has sent a team to Manila to review the country's tax system. Camacho was scheduled to meet with the IMF mission yesterday afternoon.

The finance secretary said the government would try to convince the IMF tax team to support the plan to amend the current system. "I will not change my mind about the merits of shifting to a gross modified tax system," he said.

A senior finance official said the IMF had expressed its misgivings on the plan to shift to a gross modified tax system, which seeks to impose a lower tax ranging from 20 to 26 percent on businesses but at the same time disallowing any deductions for items like advertisement, travel, research and development, and representation, among others.

A shift to a gross modified tax scheme would also exempt individuals earning no more than P75,000 a year from paying income tax.

The IMF, according to the finance official, believed that migrating to a gross modified tax scheme would only make it harder for the Bureau of Internal Revenue to reach its collection targets because the "under-declaration could be immense."

If ever, the Philippines will be the first country to adopt a modified gross taxation scheme, according to a former finance undersecretary whose expertise is on taxation.

"Shifting to a modified gross tax scheme would result to a loss-loss situation for the government. It may just be harder for everybody, especially for the BIR," the former finance official said.

Under the proposal, those earning P75,000 to P150,000 a year would pay a tax of 7 percent, earnings up to P350,000 annually would be slapped a tax of 14 percent, rising to 21 percent for earnings up to P650,000, and 28 percent for earnings in excess of P650,000.

At present, a 15-percent tax is slapped on individuals earning P70,000 a year, 20 percent for earnings up to P140,000, 25 percent for income up to P250,000, 30 percent for earnings up to P500,000, and 32 percent for those earning more than P500,000.

Camacho said the government would realize a higher revenue once the system shifts to gross income tax because its simplicity and affordability should attract more individuals and companies to pay the correct amounts.

He said the new measure the administration plans to push in Congress should widen the tax base and also help reform the BIR because it would lessen the "discretionary portion" of the taxable earnings, a major source of corruption.

While generally receptive to the plan, business groups and economists have cautioned the government against adopting a "risky change" that would tend to bloat an already swollen budget deficit.

Former Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla said that economies that dare to shift to a new tax system usually do so when they enjoy a budget surplus.

The government is expecting a budget deficit of P145 billion this year, easing gradually to P130 billion in 2002. A surplus position is projected to happen only after 2006.

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, agreed that ideally, a government that would embark on a new tax system should do so from a position of strength.

The government has estimated that initially, the shift to a modified gross income tax system would lead to a revenue loss of P28.71 billion.

7-month car sales down 13.6% due to weak market

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SALES of cars and light commercial vehicles dropped by 13.6 percent in the first seven months this year as new models failed to excite a market dampened by the political crisis and a weak economy.

The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. said that automotive sales fell to 42,604 units from January to July this year from 49,302 during the same period a year ago. The Philippines is the only country among Asean's major economies where the automotive industry failed to sustain last year's sales rebound.

Sales of Asian utility vehicles, sport utility vehicles, vans, pick-up trucks, buses and trucks slipped 5.4 percent to 29,493 in the first seven months from 31,165 a year ago. The passenger car market bore the brunt of the downturn as sales tumbled 27.7 percent to 13,111 in the first seven months this year from 18,137 units a year ago.

Toyota maintained its top position based on industry sales with 10,358 units sold for a 24.3-percent market share.

Mitsubishi was second with 9,200 units sold equivalent to a market share of 21.5 percent. Honda was third with 5,777 units or 13.6-percent share. Isuzu had a market share of 12.34 percent with 5,257 units sold. Nissan was fifth with 4,807 units sold or an 11.3-percent market share.

INDICATORS

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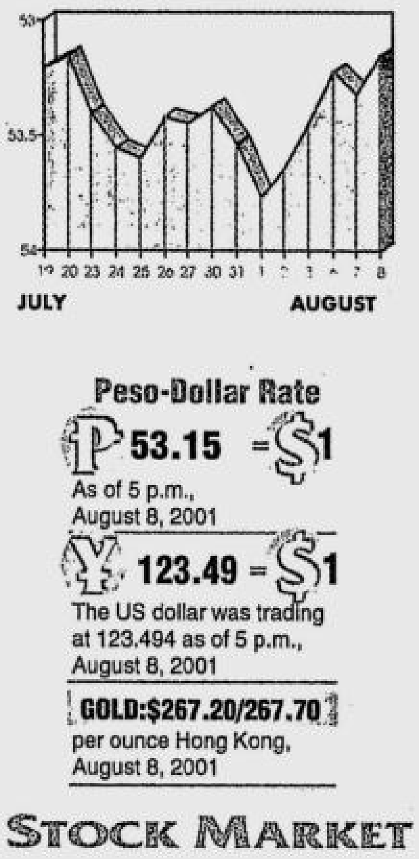


GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

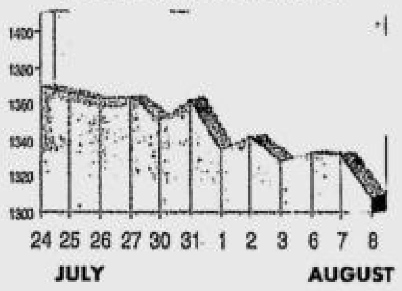
₱53.15 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
August 8, 2001

¥ 123.49 = $1
The US dollar was trading
at 123.494 as of 5 p.m.,
August 8, 2001

GOLD:$267.20/267.70
per ounce Hong Kong,
August 8, 2001

STOCK MARKET

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares prices fall 1.8%

SHARES prices fell 1.8 percent yesterday due to pessimism over the country's economic prospects, analysts said.

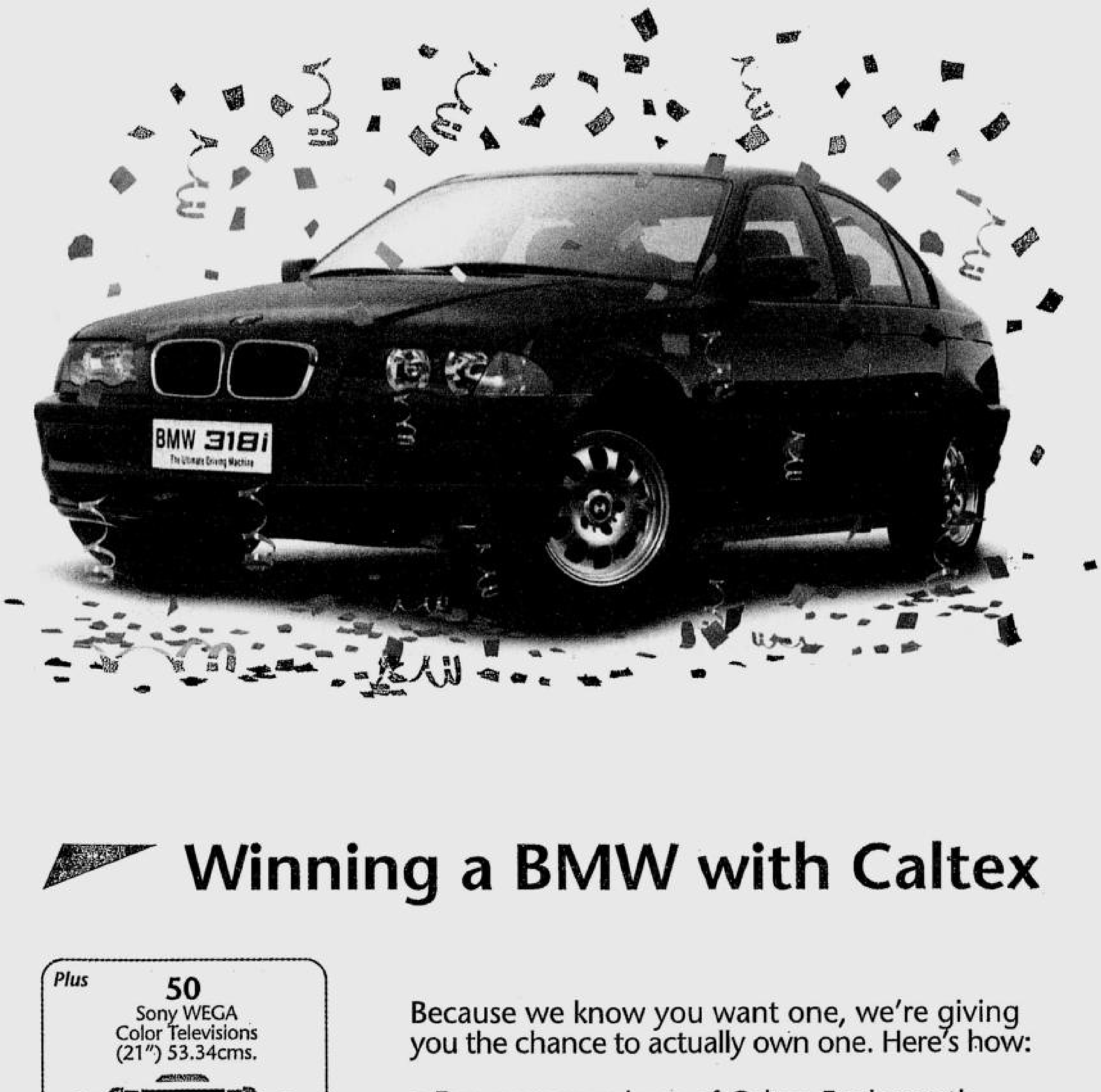
The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 23.62 points to 1,308.41.

"Investors remained sidelined, worried over the plaguing issue of peace and order in the country," said Roberto Cano of BPI Securities Corp., citing a continuing hostage crisis in Basilan which has lasted more than two months.

"People are not looking at the Philippines. They don't see dramatic growth for the Philippines, even in 2002. With that, its hard to build up confidence," added Albert Chua of All Asia Asset Management Inc.

Volume fell to 731 million shares but value rose to P1.03 billion from 549.88 million shares worth P688.64 million on Tuesday. *AFP*

What Drives You



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See flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0993 Series of 2001

What Drives You CALTEX

Sold down the waiver

SO THIS cute administration wants to prop up the weakening peso. For a good reason! The peso exchange rate is such a major worry now that it grips bright minds in business.

Those people are, thus, forced to spend less time for other more important things, like reading newspaper business columns! Can you imagine that?

Anyway, our government can support the peso many ways. Gloriaetta just made a bold move. She pleaded to the Bangko Sentral to do something about it.

I still think that the most effective way remains, well, bringing in huge amounts of dollars. These can come into the country either as loans or as investments.

The Department of Finance fixes the loans; the Department of Trade and Industry, the investments. The two are so good with their jobs, they just sold us down the river.

* * *

SUPPOSEDLY, one important investment that the DTI is fixing—meaning, "arranging" and not . . . well, "rigging"—is the project of US cigarette maker Philip Morris.

In various media statements, the DTI proclaims the good news of the arrival of Philip Morris. The DTI says the US firm is investing $300 million here. Is that so?

I'm afraid the DTI only tries to fool us. It harps on such a huge amount just to make the Philip Morris project look pretty. For it's really ugly.

Well, just think cancer! And by this, Madam Auring, I don't mean one of the signs of the zodiac!

* * *

I'M sure the heavens have nothing to do with this Cabinet secretary's hobby. For his pastime, I heard, he is collecting complaints of sexual harassment.

In fact, Malacañang is hearing a lot about his appetite for morality cases. And this is supposed to be a moral government. I refer you back to the latest Sona.

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

Word is going around that Gloriaetta, who preaches leadership by example, intends to send home soon the sleazy bast . . . *este, hindi naman*, misguided bastard *lang*.

* * *

VIVA Vintage, owner of the exclusive television coverage of the professional basketball league PBA, like its predecessor Vintage, looks like it's also deep in money trouble.

Word in banking has it that the company is starting to pay the old loans of former Vintage boss Carlos "Bobong" Velez. This should save his classy house. It is mortgaged.

Unfortunately, Viva Vintage is not paying the old debts of the old Vintage with the PBA itself. They only amount to more than P300 million. Nothing changed, in short.

Moreover, the company is facing a possibility that its people will do an SSS. You know—stage an uprising. It seems some of its people are not getting paid.

* * *

BUT back to the DTI and Philip Morris. Our government even bends its rules for the US company. It is giving Philip Morris some major tax breaks. And what benefits do we get for such a special treatment of a vice maker?

I really don't know if the government only wants oncologists to make a lot of money! I doubt it. You see, DTI suggests it's because of the huge investments of $300 million. We need the foreign exchange, don't we?

I am delirious to report to you that only a little portion of that $300 million will actually get into the country as foreign exchange. Most of it will be in the form of equipment. Deadly equipment at that!

* * *

THIS exploiting Philip Morris, I heard, is not even putting hard currency on its factory site in Cavite. It's in another slow-moving property venture of the Lopez group.

Owning the lot, according to my angel, is another US firm. Philip Morris only intends to lease the site. Look, ma, even the rental goes back to the United States.

Actually, the foreign currency, which Philip Morris intends to bring here is only enough to pay for the construction cost. It's only a few millions—not $300 million!

By blinding us with the glitter of $300 million, the DTI only hopes we can overlook the ultimate result of the US firm's investments. You know—a lot of people dying!

* * *

WHILE the DTI sells us down the river, the DoF does a questionable waiver. The DoF waives the 20-percent withholding tax on some P12 billion worth of government IOUs.

Easily, from those government IOUs, this cash-strapped cute administration should earn P2.4 billion. Thanks to the DoF, to collect the tax, it must do some chasing.

For government IOUs called T-bills and T-notes, the DoF normally imposes a 20-percent withholding tax on the interest income. It is easy to collect that way.

It so happens that the fixer, *este*, arranger of the P12-billion deal with the DoF is a foreign bank based in Hong Kong. Yes, it's the Hong Kong Bank!

That is the same bank, by the way, which Gloriaetta quoted in her regular press conference recently as being bullish on the peso. I can only wonder why.

* * *

ANYWAY, the DoF waiver is one sure way for the investor to get away with not paying taxes. Everybody in banking knows it. I'm sure it did not escape the DoF.

With the waiver, you see, buyers of the P12-billion government IOUs must pay taxes on their interest income on their own. You know—as part of their income tax.

And who buys those IOUs? Those who have lots of money, of course. Do you realize, in paying income taxes, how many millions of ways they can cheat?

They have all sorts of lawyers and accountants who specialize in ways to cheat the government in any method: legal, semi-legal or outright criminal.

So why does this cute administration readily accept such a scheme? I guess the BIR can easily chase all those investors, be they banks or government officials. Oops!

Any other explanation must come from this cute administration's Whiz Kid. Yes, it's the one and only Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho y Go.

YOUR COMPLETE I.T. LAW HANDBOOK

The Electronic Commerce Act
The Rules on Electronic Evidence

Comments and Annotations by
Prof. Jesus M. Disini, Jr.
U.P. College of Law

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The New Rules on Electronic Evidence
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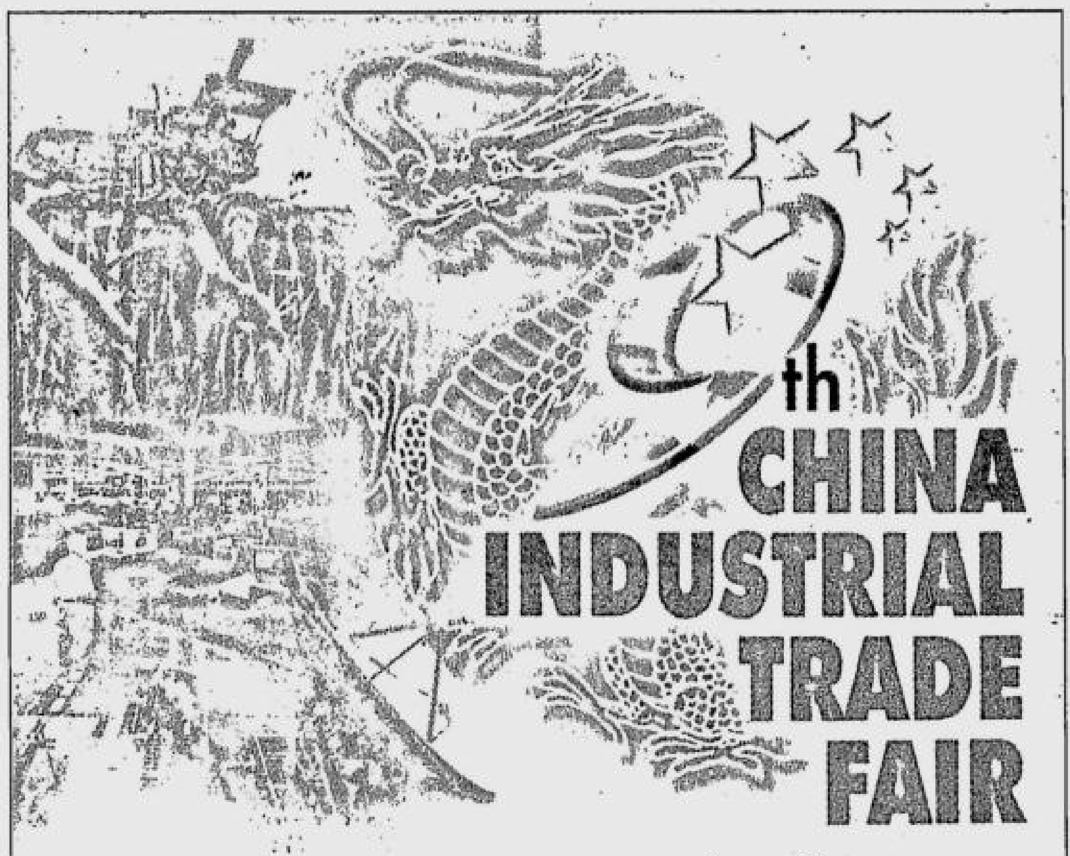
Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Electronic Commerce Act
UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce
Singapore's Electronic Transactions Act



SETTING THE PACE OF TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

AUGUST 10 - 14, 2001
10:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M.
DAILY

PHILIPPINE TRADE TRAINING CENTER,
SEN. GIL PUYAT AVE. COR. ROXAS BLVD.,
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Local bourse demutualizes

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange yesterday took a big leap into shedding its mutual status with its conversion from a non-stock organization owned by its 184 members into a stock corporation that will soon sell shares to the public.

Complying with the Aug. 8 deadline set by the Securities Regulation Code to demutualize, the PSE marked its debut into the corporate world as each of the 184 member-brokers subscribed to and fully paid for 50,000 shares.

Effective yesterday, PSE Inc. also segregated the ownership of shares in the exchange and the members' trading rights, which meant any member could now sell shares and still retail trading rights, or vice versa.

The stock exchange also imposed a moratorium on the issuance of new trading rights, which meant that groups wishing to obtain trading rights must purchase the right from existing members.

The debut as a stock market corporation was held during ceremonies at the PSE trading floor in Makati, led by top PSE officials, including the board of governors that will now be known as the board of directors and function as the highest policy-making body of the demutualized exchange.

Majority of the 15-member board is now controlled by non-brokers.

"In a matter of time, we will see our very own company's stock trading symbol flashed through the trading terminal. Until that time comes, we are faced with the task of restructuring and molding the exchange into a cutting edge company," PSE chair Felipe Yap said.

"Our work does not end today. In fact, it has only just begun, he stressed.

PSE president Ramon Garcia said the internal target was to conduct the PSE's initial public offering by Aug. 8 next year.

DISCLOSURES

BELLE Corp. said it was not planning to transfer any of its shares in **Tagaytay Highlands International Golf Club Inc.** and **Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club Inc.** to **Highlands Prime** as earlier reported.

* * *

RFM Corp. said that at its current valuation, the effective price per share of **Cosmos Bottling Corp.** was around P6.48.

* * *

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas approved on July 27 **Philippine Savings Bank's** plan to establish 13 new banking offices.

* * *

A. BROWN Co. Inc. announced the resignation of Gerardo Lanuza Jr. as director of the company. Elected to replace him was Jose Ma. Francisco.

* * *

ALASKA Milk Corp. purchased 7,000 of its shares at P2.04 per share.

* * *

MULTITECH Investments Inc. has rescheduled its annual stockholders' meeting from Aug. 15 to Nov. 29.

* * *

EXPRESS Holdings Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of JG Summit Holdings Inc., bought additional 42,000 shares of Robinsons Land Corp. at P2 per share. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63	63	62.5	63	116,800
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	1,410
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34.5	34.5	33.5	34	62,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	207	209	207	209	38,760
Philippine National Bank	47	47	47	47	22,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	240	246	240	246	250
Manulife Financial Corp.	1630	1640	1630	1640	8,650
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1320	1320	1315	1320	19,620
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	38	38	38	38	14,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	1,960,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	610	615	610	615	959,580
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	1,500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	44,100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	12,000
Piltel	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.48	670,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	630	630	625	625	106,730
Ivantage Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	110,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	32.5	32.5	31.5	31.5	19,400
Manila Electric Co. B	39.5	39.5	37.5	38	1,146,200
Petron Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.82	1.84	3,423,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.1	1.1	61,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.96	1.96	1.9	1.9	910,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	300,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	2,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.02	120,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.8	1,482,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.25	934,800
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	26.5	26.5	26	26	31,000
Pancake House Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	30,000
RFM Corp.	2.28	2.34	2.22	2.32	6,386,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42	42	41	41.5	42,900
San Miguel Corp. B	55	55	54	54	26,000
Universal Robina Corp.	4	4.8	4	4.8	8,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	4,865,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.56	60,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10.75	11	10.5	10.75	1,800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.08	1.08	860,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	177,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	300,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	12	10.5	12	400
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.225	0.25	0.21	0.25	2,800,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.74	1.76	1.7	1.7	1,476,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	220,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	40,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	450,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	950,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	30,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27.5	27.5	26.5	26.5	127,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.18	430,000
Ionics Inc.	10	10	10	10	6,000
Ipeople Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	30,000
Ipeople Inc. B	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	7,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.92	1.92	1,462,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	53,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.69	710,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.4	2,170,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	160,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	2,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.22	0.235	880,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	230,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	10,000
Music Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.93	170,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.87	0.87	0.79	0.79	400,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14	13.75	13.75	72,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.55	1,200,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	1,990,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.52	0.53	0.51	0.51	440,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	150,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38	38	38	38	278,200
Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	5,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	615	615	615	615	670
Jollibee Warrants	13	13	13	13	2,468,200
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	205,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	10,800
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	6,436,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	40,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.84	1.84	421,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
City & Land Developers	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	11,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2	2	2	100,000
SM Development Corp.	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.86	60,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.8	5.9	5,006,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	1,000,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	13,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0044	0.0044	0.0042	0.0042	11,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.08	2.08	2	2	25,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	149,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	11,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.35	1,140,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.38	0.38	0.34	0.34	3,150,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	11,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	1,000,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	19,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	270,990	59,534,650.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	496,929,980	904,883,440.00
PRO	14,084,000	61,203,940.00
Mining	189,325,000	2,678,200.00
OIL	31,040,000	505,200.00
GRAND TOTALS:	731,664,970	1,028,839,930.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	539.50	DOWN 4.21
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,847.19	DOWN 22.58
PRO	483.57	DOWN 15.98
Mining	1,251.92	DOWN 20.21
OIL	1.74	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	817.28	UP 7.82
Composite	1,308.41	DOWN 23.62

NO. OF ADVANCES: 16; NO. OF DECLINES: 56; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 36; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 108; NO. OF TRADES: 2,154

CURRENCIES

Aug. 8, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.139341	1.000000	53.2930
Japan	Yen	0.009225	0.008097	0.4315
United Kingdom	Pound	1.613763	1.416400	75.4842
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146086	0.128220	6.8332
Switzerland	Franc	0.663411	0.582276	31.0312
Canada	Dollar	0.742242	0.651466	34.7186
Singapore	Dollar	0.640620	0.562272	29.9652
Australia	Dollar	0.586776	0.515013	27.4466
Bahrain	Dinar	3.022287	2.652661	141.3683
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.303808	0.266652	14.2107
Brunei	Dollar	0.637822	0.559816	29.8343
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000122	0.000107	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.025068	0.022002	1.1726
UAE	Dirham	0.310278	0.272331	14.5133
Korea	Won	0.000890	0.000781	0.0416
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.877700	46.7753
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.448761	23.9158
France	Franc	0.152450	0.133805	7.1309
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.398283	21.2257
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.063785	3.3993
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021758	1.1595
Italy	Lire	0.000619	0.000543	0.0289
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.147619	7.8671
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004378	0.2333
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005275	0.2811
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021758	1.1595
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.114449	59.3923

PLDT profit surges to ₱1.4B in first half

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co., the country's biggest telecom firm, yesterday reported a sharp increase in first-half net income as subscriptions and revenue surged at its mobile phone unit.

PLDT's net income surged to P1.37 billion from P122.5 million a year ago, but this was accompanied by a marked slowdown in its fixed-line business.

Its profit shot up mainly because of the turnaround in its wireless subsidiary Smart Communications Inc., which posted a net income of P1.8 billion against a loss of P1.9 billion in 2000.

Analysts said, however, that after writing off some investments in debt-saddled unit Pilipino Telephone Co. (Piltel), PLDT is assured of sustained profit growth going forward.

"It's at the higher end of expectations but not yet significantly above expectations . . . I think overall, in terms of operations, from here on, it will become better," said Giovanni dela Rosa, an analyst at Indosuez W.I. Carr.

Full-year net income of PLDT is expected to hit P2.42 billion from P1.11 billion in 2000.

PLDT, which dominates the local telecommunications sector, said revenues from mobile phone subsidiaries Smart Communications and Piltel rose to P12.02 billion in the first half against the P7.06 billion a year ago.

Smart accounted for P10.5 billion, up 82.4 percent from the year-ago period. Smart's GSM subscriber base was 3.59 million at the end of the first half, up about 55 percent in the previous six months.

"The remarkable gains in our cellular subscriber base and its profitability give us every reason to believe that the wireless group will be an important engine to PLDT's growth in the medium-term," PLDT president Manuel Pangilinan said in a statement.

Wireless phone services accounted for 32.7 percent of PLDT's total revenues against only 24 percent a yearago but there was a corresponding slowdown in fixed-line revenues partly due to falling rates.

The company's full revenues in the period totalled P36.72 billion from P29.48 billion and the contribution of fixed-line services slipped to 66.7 percent from 75.7 percent in the same 2000 period.

International long distance revenues fell 3.7 percent in the first half, as its share of total revenues slid to 17.4 percent from 22.6 percent a year ago.

National long distance revenues fell 17.7 percent on the year, with its share to total revenues consequently falling to 12.4 percent in the first half from 18.7 percent.

Shares of PLDT closed P5 lower at P625 as traders voiced concern about the weaker prospects for the firm's fixed-line revenues.

But Pangilinan said the fall in fixed-line revenues would be addressed.

"For the remainder of the year, we will focus on stimulating the growth of our fixed-line subscribers as well as our fixed-line products and services," he said.

"Our continuing priority will be to improve operating efficiencies and reduce spending."

PLDT said the carrying value of its investment in Piltel common shares had been reduced to zero as of June 30, 2001. Thus, PLDT will stop consolidating Piltel's income in its books as the mobile phone firm will become only an affiliate. PLDT will continue to hold investments in Piltel preferred shares.

PDIC turns over Urban, subsidiary to Exportbank

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday turned over the reins of closed Urban Bank Inc. and its 40-percent-owned investment house, Urbancorp Investments Inc., to Export and Industry Bank, a regular commercial bank owned largely by the Philippine Exporters Confederation.

In turnover ceremonies at the penthouse of Urban Bank building in Makati City, state-owned Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. handed over a check for P1.5 billion to Exportbank representing the funds of Urban Bank held in trust by PDIC as the bank's receiver.

Corazon dela Paz, appointed by the Securities and Exchange Commission as interim receiver for Urbancorp, said she would deliver roughly P500 million of the investment house's funds to Exportbank as soon as she receives releases from the SEC.

Exportbank president Benjamin Castillo said the approximately P2 billion in cash would be mobilized to pay the initial P500,000 per depositor/creditor of Urban Bank and Urbancorp on the first day of the bank's reopening later this August.

Under the rehabilitation plan jointly proposed by Exportbank and the National Association of Urban Bank and Urbancorp Depositors and Creditors, Exportbank, Urban Bank and Urbancorp would merge to create a new bank with an initial capital base of P3.8 billion and close to P28 billion in resources.

The rehabilitation plan, earlier approved by the PDIC, SEC and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, provides that publicly listed Urban Bank would be the surviving entity in the merger, but the bank's name would be changed to Export and Industry Bank.

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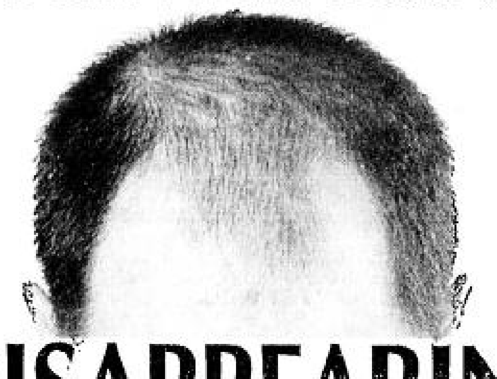
The speakers are Oscar Lagman, Consultant, CGU International Insurance, plc. Alfred Panizales, President, C3I Philippines, Incorporated, Marivic Ac-Ac, Chair, Marketing Department, College of Arts and Sciences, San Beda College, Dr. Jaime Ong, Professor, De La Salle University.

Schedule: August 21, 22, 24, 2001 (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday)
1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
ACCEED, AIM Conference Center, Makati City

Course Fee: Early Bird Rate (up to August 10, ONLY)
PMA Member P 4,700.00
Non-PMA Member P 5,500.00
Regular Rate (August 11, onwards)
PMA Member P 5,500.00
Non-PMA Member P 6,000.00

For inquiries, please call the PMA Secretariat c/o Ms. Lira C. Ligero at tels.: 892-3144; 813-0466; 893-7127; 893-6459 or E-mail: lirapma@edsamail.com.ph

IS YOUR HAIR DOING A



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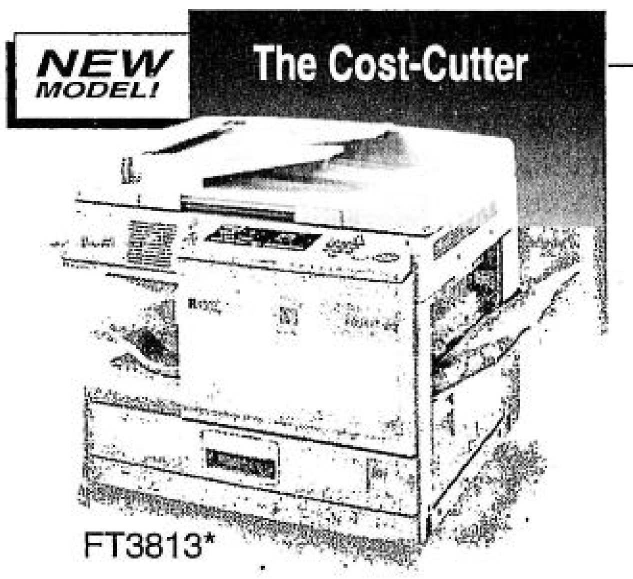

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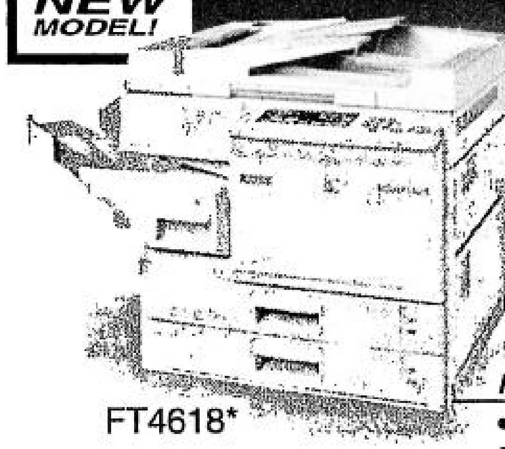

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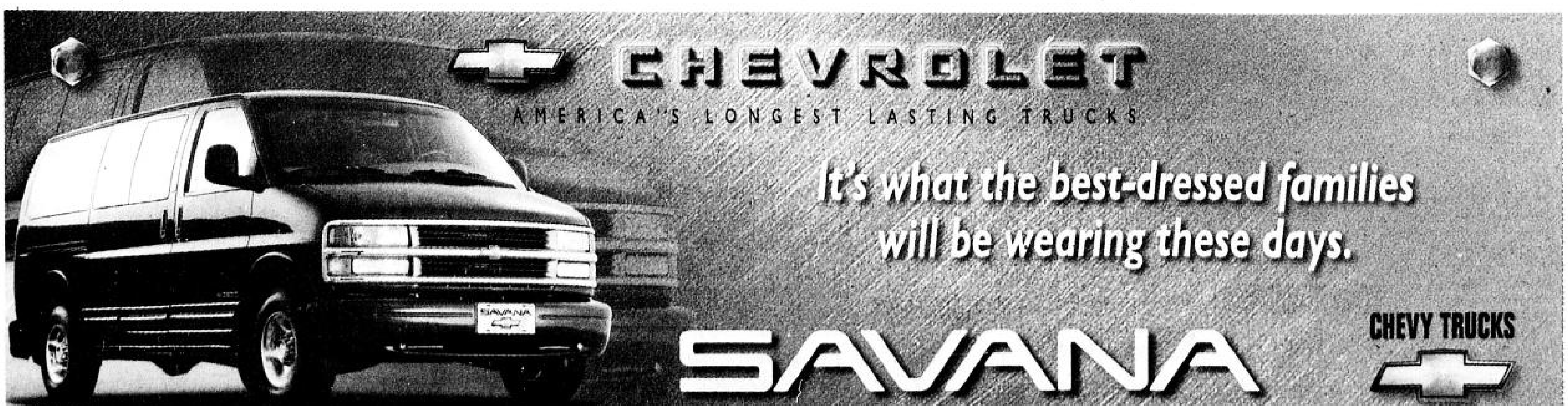
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Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JAIME S. LETAN Located at Mandaluyong City has been extrajudicially settled by her heirs as per Doc 435, Page 88, Book 57, Series of 2001 by Notary Public Sofronio A. Hernandez of Batangas City.
(PDI-Aug. 9,16 & 23, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ARSENIO F. MATIAS has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs with Doc. #46, Page #11, Bk #114 under the Notary Public of Gregorio D. Davis Jr. of Makati City.
(PDI-July 26, Aug. 2 & 9, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ALFREDO C. AQUINO has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. # 413; Book # 343; Page # 84; Series of 1999 before notary public AMPARO G. OCAMPO of Manila (PDI-Aug. 2, 9 & 16, 2001)

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08 August 2001

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The NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, Manila invites interested Medium "A" and above contractors, preferably exposed and expert on interior works to apply for pre-qualification and to bid for the proposed RENOVATION OF NBI MAIN BLDG. LOBBY AND OTHERS, NBI Compound, Taft Avenue, Manila with an estimated cost of more than PESOS: FIVE MILLION (P 5,000,000.00).

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Particulars:

Submission of accomplished Pre-qualification forms	starting August 9 to 15, 2001 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at PBAC Secretariat Room 101 NBI Main Building
Issuance of Bid Documents	August 24, 2001 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at PBAC Secretariat Room 101 NBI Main Building
Pre-Bid Conference	August 27, 2001 2:00 p.m., at NBI Training Room NBI Main Building
Schedule for submission and Opening of Bids	September 6, 2001 2:00 p.m. at NBI Training Room NBI Main Building

The Pre-qualification Statement (PRE-C), duly notarized, conform and be executed in the prescribed form and shall be under oath signifying their correctness and authenticity.

All particulars relative to Pre-qualification, Bid bond, Performance bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of P.D. 1594 and its implementing Rules and Regulations.

The NBI reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

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" Don't grieve for us, for now We're free; We're following the path God laid for us
Lift up your hearts and share with us; God wanted us now, He set us free."

SOCORRO SISON SURLA

Born on May 21, 1916. She passed away in the grace of our Lord on July 27, 2001 at Inglewood, California, U.S.A.

Her Husband: **PROF. MARCELINO T. SURLA (†)** and
their Children and families;
CARMELITA (†) & FLORANTE A. AQUINO (†) : Anna,Catherine & Scott Marsteller & A.J.;
MARCELINO, JR. & EVELYN S. MAYUGA: Apple; Edwina Angeles-Theresa & Gil Aquino, Carmela & Gary;
HERMINIA & FELIPE DE GUZMAN: Cyril, Paul & Vangie, Aileen, Analee & Ruth;
ERLINDA & HECTOR M. ALBAN: Teresa & Tyrone Lane, Caroline & Earl Juson & Marc;
CASTOR IV: Leticia Reyes – Kristine, Carlo & Paolo; **JEANETTE SORIANO** – C.J.;
EDGARDO & ANITA O. ROCHA: Jed, Richard & Christina;
GERARDO & AIDA E. BALMACEDA: Mikko, Pompom, Inna & Bel;
ALBERTO & JOJI FALLER: Cocoy, Abigail & B.J.;
RONALDO;
ERMELINA: James & Jeremy Vargas;
Sisters: **Angela S. Teleron & Soledad S. Meneses** & their families;
Sisters-in-law: **Pilar S. Sison & Pilar Y. Surla** & their families,
other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

From California, U.S.A. her remains will be brought to and lie in state at the Don Bosco Chapel, Pasay Road cor. Pasong Tamo St., Makati City, on Thursday, August 9, 2001. Internment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Paranaque City on Friday, August 14, 2001, after the 9:00 A.M. mass.

CARMELITA SURLA AQUINO M.D.

Born on December 17, 1938, she has joined her husband, Engr. Florante A. Aquino, and parents, Prof. Marcelino T. Surla and Socorro Sison Surla in eternal life on July 28,2001, at Palms, Los Angeles, California, USA. She is survived by her children: Anna, Catherine & Scott Marsteller and A.J.; brothers, sisters, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, their families, other relatives and friends.

From California, U.S.A. her remains will be brought to the Don Bosco Chapel, Pasay Road, Makati City on Friday afternoon, August 10, 2001. She will interred beside her husband at the Alaminos, Municipal Cemetery after the 10:00 A.M. mass at the Alaminos, Laguna Catholic Church on Saturday, August 11, 2001.
Please pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

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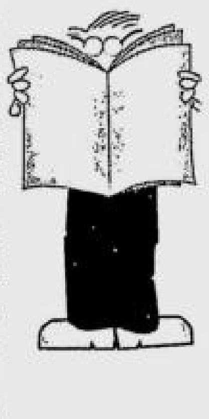

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bac_secretariat_afpmp@hotmail.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the UPGRADE OF ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER (APC) M113 (A1s and A2s), with an approved budget of One Hundred Forty Four Million Pesos (Php 144,000,000.00) under the AFP Modernization Program.

Only bids from entities which make, develop, fabricate, assemble, build or otherwise produce the APC M113 shall be entertained.

Bid documents will be available for issuance starting **August 9, 2001** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Material and Technology Development, J9, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (Php 15,000.00) which is not refundable. The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective Bidder authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of the bid documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **August 21, 2001** at 2:00 PM (local time) at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC), Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders are required to submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat seven (7) days prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

The Bidder shall be allowed to inspect the APC M113 and facilities upon purchase of bid documents until the deadline of submission of the First Stage envelopes.

Deadline for submission of Bid Documents (First Stage) is on September 11, 2001 at 9:00 AM (local time) and followed by the Opening of Bids at 1:00 PM at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC), Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

FOR THE CHAIRMAN, BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC):

(Sgd.) **CARLO V. ALCANTARA**
Captain PA
Legal Officer

(PDI--August 8 & 9, 2001)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel: 911-6433/911-6001 Loc 6592; Tel/Fax: 912-5491
bac_secretariat_afpmp@hotmail.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the UPGRADE OF TEN (10) UH-1H HELICOPTERS of the Philippine Air Force with an approved budget of Three Hundred Eighty Four Million Pesos (Php 384,000.000.00) under the AFP Modernization Program.

Only bids from prime contractors who may be the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of the UH-1H Helicopter and its T-53 Engine or their duly authorized repair facilities shall be entertained.

Eligibility/Bid documents will be available for issuance starting **August 10, 2001** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Material and Technology Development, J9, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of Thirty Five Thousand Pesos (Php 35,000.00) which is not refundable. The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective Bidder authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of the bid documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **August 23, 2001** at 2:00 PM (local time) at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC), Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders are required to submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat seven (7) days before to the Pre-Bid Conference.

Deadline for submission of appropriate Eligibility/Bid Documents (First Stage) shall be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference. Bidders shall be allowed to inspect the UH-1H Helicopters and PAF Facilities where the project will be undertaken after the Pre-Bid Conference until the deadline for submission of the First Stage Envelopes.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

FOR THE CHAIRMAN, BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC):

(Sgd.) **JOSE L. REYES**
Colonel (GSC) PAF
Vice-Chairman, BAC

(PDI--August 9 & 10, 2001)

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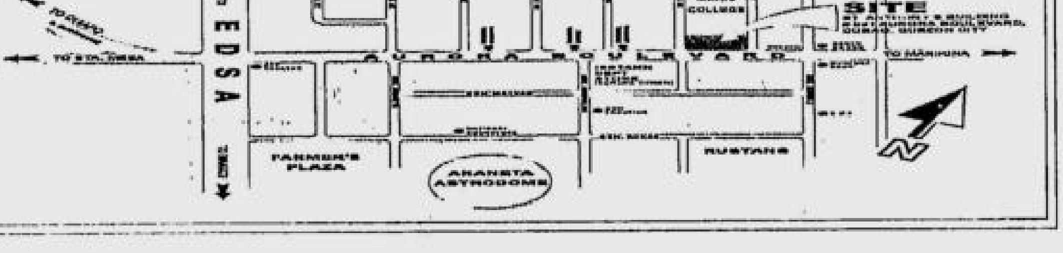


People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

New commissioners for NCRFW

ON July 7, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo inducted the newly appointed commissioners of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women at the Malacañang Heroes Hall.

The NCRFW board is composed of secretaries of various departments and NGOs representing various sectors. The new NGO commissioners include Isabelita Palanca for trade and industry, Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez for media and arts, Germelyn Esparago for urban poor, Juanita Gomez for peasants and fisherfolk, Victoria Corpuz for indigenous peoples, Dr. Eulalia Lim for the elderly and disabled, Jurgette Honculada for labor, Encarnacion Raralio for science and health, Myrna Feliciano for academe/education, Amelou Benitez-Reyes for culture, and Myrna Yao for the National Council of Women in the Philippines.

Sitting as ex-officio members of the NCRFW board are the secretaries of the following departments: Labor and Employment (DOLE); National Economic and Development Authority (Neda); Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); Education, Culture and Sports (DECS); Health (DOH); Foreign Affairs (DFA); Interior and Local Government (DILG); Trade and Industry (DTI); and Budget and Management (DBM).

Chairperson Aurora Javate-de Dios said that the new set of commissioners will concentrate on the implementation of the goals of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration, enunciated by President Arroyo last March 8, Women's Day, for women's human rights, economic empowerment, and active participation in good governance. "At the same time, the new board will build on the gains of the past in making the bureaucracy work better for women," added De Dios.

The President wants to see concrete changes in the lives of Filipino women by the end of her term. Her priorities are lowering the incidence, if not eliminating, violence against women (VAW); providing better and more expanded economic opportunities for women, especially credit support to poor and marginalized women and women-led businesses; and increasing their participation in decision-making, particularly in promoting a transparent and corruption-free bureaucracy," De Dios said.

The NCRFW intends to strengthen and help assist in implementing and monitoring legislation, policies and government programs to address violence against women. Among these are the effective implementation of the anti-rape and anti-sexual harassment laws through the mobilization of crisis centers nationwide and training of frontline organizations such as the PNP Women's Desks and other pillars of the criminal justice system. "We are hoping that this time, the 12th Congress can pass the anti-domestic violence and anti-trafficking bills which are priority bills of the GMA administration," said De Dios.

The new NCRFW Board is also working out the implementation of the Gender and Development (GAD) Budget. The GAD Budget mandates all government agencies, LGUs and government-owned and -controlled corporations to allocate at least 5 percent of the regular funds for programs and projects that address women's issues.

"In line with the thrust of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration to alleviate poverty and deliver broad-based development, NCRFW will continue to improve the implementation of the GAD Budget because it is the most potent mechanism for women's empowerment and gender equality," said De Dios.

"Although Filipino women have achieved major gains in legislation and in making government work for women, there are a lot of issues that we have to address such as the rising incidence of violence against women, including migrant women, the lack of women's economic opportunities, and the feminization of poverty, among others. We have a lot of work to do," said De Dios.

NHA MANAGEMENT, UNION SIGN CNA

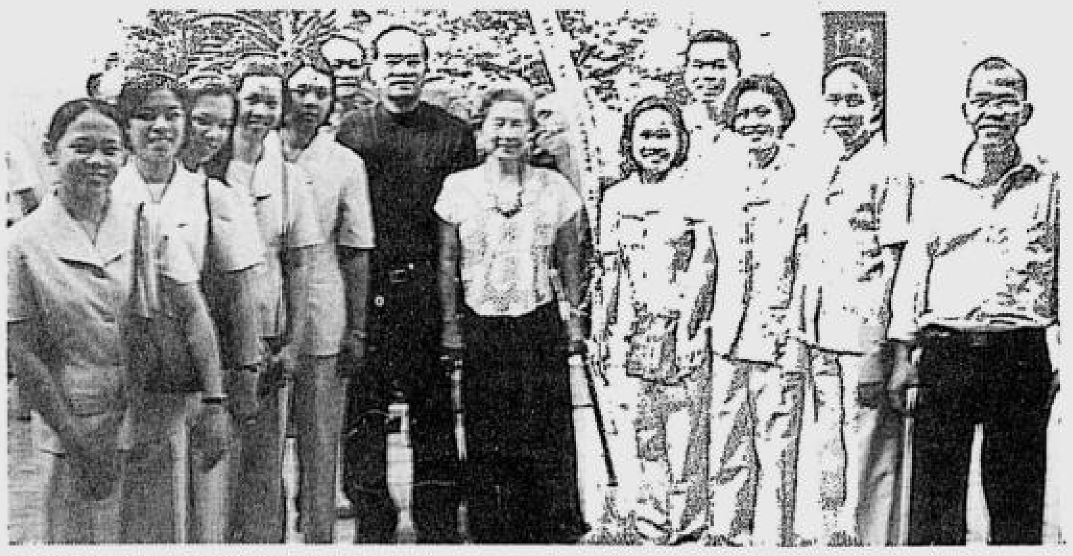
The National Housing Authority (NHA) management and its union, the Consolidated Union of Employees (CUE), recently signed the Collective Negotiation Agreement (CNA) granting NHA officers and employees additional benefits and compensation packages for the next three years. Signing the agreement are (from left) NHA assistant general manager Joseph Sison, NHA general manager Edgardo Pamintuan, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair Michael Defensor and CUE president Rosalinda Nartates.

SCHOLARSHIP FOR TWO PINOYS

The Singapore government has awarded the Temasek Scholarship to two outstanding Filipinos for the Master in Public Policy (MPP) program. Allan Odono Millar, a senior economic development specialist with the National Economic and Development Authority, and Benilda Albao who worked for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, will pursue the 17-month MPP program from July 2001 to November 2002 at the National University of Singapore. Singapore Ambassador Jacky Foo (right) is shown with Temasek scholar Allan O. Millar (left).

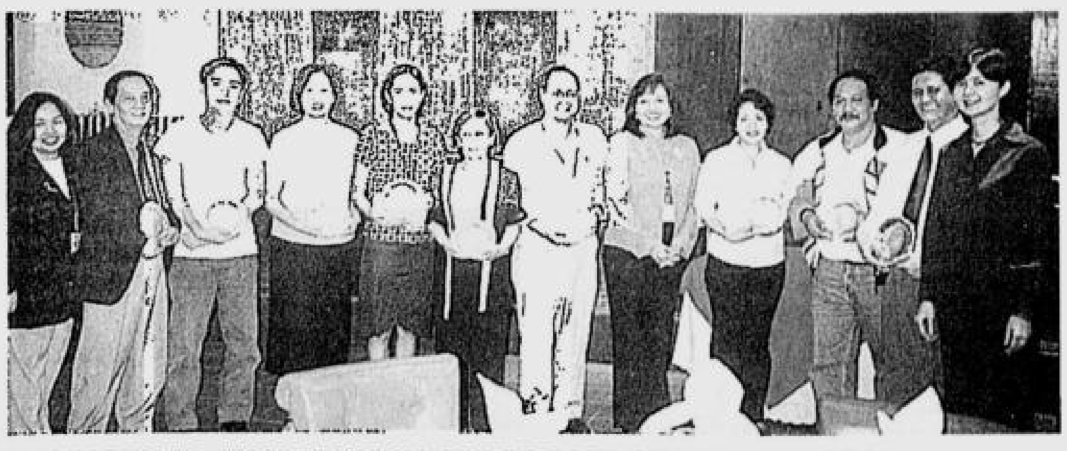
DTT CO-SPONSORS WOMEN'S MEET

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (DTT), a Big 5 international accounting firm, co-sponsored the 'Women Leaders in a Global Economy' conference in Prague on July 11-13 together with Avon, Baxter International, Citigroup, The Dow Chemical Company, Eli Lilly and Co., IBM, JP Morgan Chase, Marriott International, Merrill Lynch & Company, and Renaissance Hotel. Dr. Conchita L. Manabat, CEO and managing partner of C.L. Manabat & Co./DTT in the Philippines (shown second from left, front row with other DTT delegates) joined the panel in the Voices from the Top with Dina Dublon, chief finance officer of JP Morgan Chase; Amparo Moraleda Martinez, general manager of IBM for Spain and Portugal; and Magdalena Nemer, general manager of Baxter International for Latin America. The panelists answered questions on career paths, the secrets to their success, their mistakes, their mentors, and how they integrated their work with their family and personal lives. The conference was well participated by some 120 international women leaders from the sponsoring multinational companies.



FAI VISITS MABINI SHRINE

Sammy Yap (center, in black), school director of First Asia Institute of Technology and Humanities (FAI), led the delegation of school officers and staff who paid tribute to Apolinario Mabini during the hero's 137th birthday commemoration at the Mabini Shrine in Tanauan City, Batangas. First Asia Institute of Technology and Humanities is the premier educational institution in Tanauan. The school offers preschool, grade school, science high school and college courses. It is equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories and its classrooms are airconditioned. Yap is shown with Gloria Carandang; Dr. Amado Magsino, dean of student welfare; Eufronio Mangubat, high school principal (far right) and FAI teachers.



WORLDEXCO AWARDEES IN CORPORATE GIVEAWAYS 2001

Worldexco, organizers of the successful Corporate Giveaways 2001 Annual Buyers' Show held recently at the World Trade Center Metro Manila, names the winners of the 3rd Excellence Awards. Shown receiving their silver plates are (second from left) Manuel V. Siggaoat, president/CEO, Manel's Leathergoods (indigenous category); Neil Glinofria, junior designer, Filipinas Alfa Co. (leather category); Millie Kilayko, managing partner, Sweet Greens (breakables), Ma. Lourdes Romero, store manager, Creative Details (food and beverage packaging); Elizabeth Consolacion, marketing director, VY Domingo (metal); Ramon Sicat, president, Xian Int'l Corp (paper); Doreen Marquez, admin and purchasing manager, Excel Glass (wood); Danilo Bañas and Pompei Manalang, assistant general manager and sales manager, respectively, Chia'ro Trading (fabric and synthetic). Joining them were Worldexco's Raquel Romero (first from left), special events manager; Lynne Z. Romero, (eight from left) president; and Ma'an Azurin, marketing manager. The Excellence Awards are handed out each year to Corporate Giveaways exhibitors who produce highly creative and innovative products or ideas that can serve as functional business gifts.

Clips

Nido exhibit at SM

NESTLE Philippines, the maker of Nido, invites everyone to the Nido Little Artists Exhibit at the SM Megamall Building B, Atrium from Aug. 9 to 15. The exhibit will showcase the artworks of student participants. 167 pieces of artworks will be displayed for the public to see and enjoy. National artist Napoleon Abueva and world-renowned Filipino artist Mauro Malang Santos will grace the event. Presidential daughter Luli Arroyo and Nestor Jardin, president of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, are also expected to attend the exhibit.

Go speaks at DSAP confab

MULTI-AWARDED marketing professional Josiah Go will share his expertise in and knowledge of direct sales at the Direct Sales Management Conference slated for Aug. 9 to 10 at the SGV Hall, AIM Conference Center in Makati City. Go will be speaking on "Professionalism – How to Deal with Pyramiding and Proselytizing Issues in the Industry". Go, president of Waters-AMC Philippines, is also the president and chief marketing strategist of Mansmith and Fielders, one of the leading marketing and sales training companies in the Philippines. For more information call the DSAP Secretariat at 864-2673 or e-mail dsaphils@mozcom.com.

Theology lecture in Ateneo

THE THEOLOGY Department of the Ateneo de Manila University is holding the first of its Public Lectures Series by Fr. James F. Keenan, S.J., an internationally known professor of Moral Theology who teaches at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology and who is at present a visiting professor of the Loyola School of Theology. Fr. Keenan will lecture on "Catholic Ethicists and HIV/AIDS Prevention" on Friday, Aug. 10, at the Escaler Hall, SEC Building, Ateneo de Manila University, from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

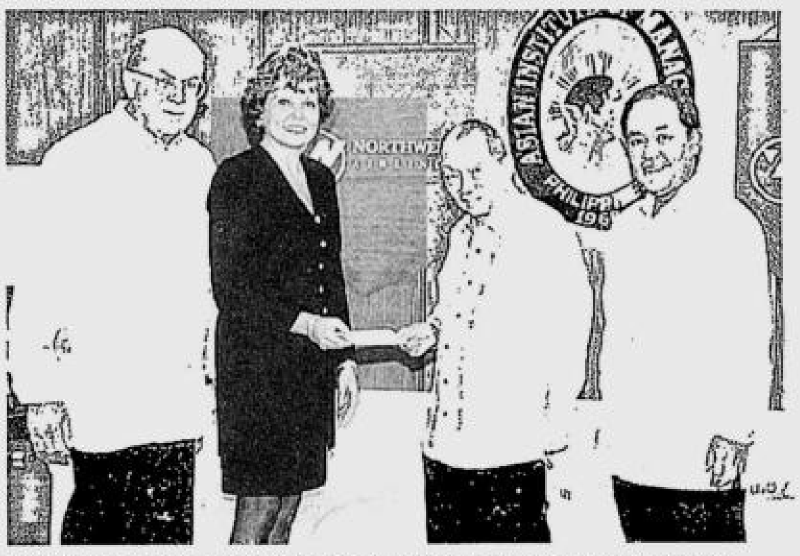
Aussie MCQ exam passer

CORNISTA

DR. Anna Cristina G. Ceniza-Cornista recently passed the Australian Medical Council MCQ examination held in May 2001 at Sydney, Australia. Cornista is the daughter of Victor and Belen Ceniza. She is an alumna of De La Salle University College of Medicine and St. Scholastica's College, Manila.

Photo buffs can learn more

PHOTOGRAPHY enthusiasts who want to learn more can take the series of basic and advanced photography courses organized by the Federation Philippine Photographers Foundation Inc. (FPPFI). The basic course will start on Aug. 12 at the Yslas Restaurante, Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. Those who want to take the advanced course must first finish the basic course. The successive four-Sunday basic photo course workshop will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. The advanced course is six successive Sundays. FPPFI holds office at the seventh floor, Comfoods Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City. Call Shely Tan at 843-5341/813-7420 or e-mail ppfpwm@pacific.net.ph



NORTHWEST SUPPORTS W. SYCIP GRAD SCHOOL

Northwest Airlines recently joined the ranks of prestigious international and local corporate donors to the W. Sycip Graduate School of Business Management, formerly the AIM Graduate School of MBM and MM. The donation, personally endorsed by NWA chair Gary Wilson at NWA Minneapolis Headquarters, is part of Northwest's regional thrust on its continued commitment to local business communities and socio-civic affairs. On hand to witness the donation were (from left) Northwest-ITI chair Donald Marshall; NWA general manager for the Philippines, Guam and Micronesia Laurie Lofgren; AIM co-founder/co-chair Washington Sycip, and AIM president Roberto de Ocampo.

VRPMC ISO 9001 CERTIFIED

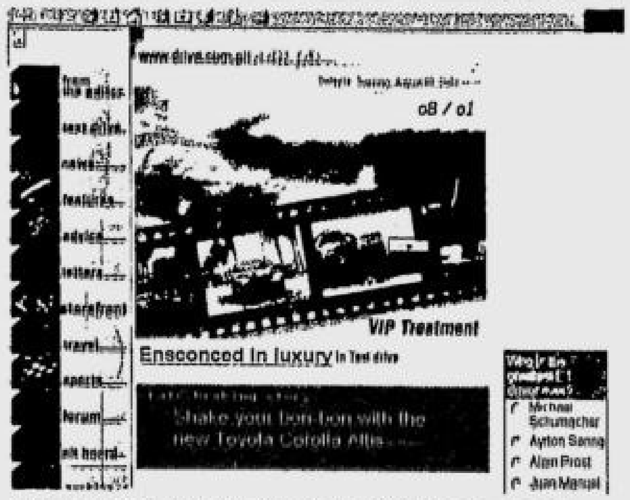
The International Organization for Standardization announced that the Dr. Victor R. Potenciano Medical Center (VRPMC) has achieved ISO 9001 certification, making it the first hospital in Metro Manila to receive the international distinction. Department of Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit (second from left) is shown being welcomed by Virma Potenciano Vergel de Dios, VRPMC hospital administrator (third from left), Irma P.E. Potenciano, VRPMC chair and Dr. Conrado Dayrit, VRPMC medical director at the unveiling of the ISO 9001 certificate. ISO 9001 certification attests that VRPMC meets internationally accepted standards of quality in its management and service procedures.

SARA LEE SHAW IBM GETS NEW ADVENTURE

Lolit Lagdan, an independent business manager (IBM) from the Shaw branch of House of Sara Lee, was recently awarded with a brand-new Mitsubishi Sports Adventure as part of the company's Vehicle Incentive Program. The Vehicle Incentive Program is specifically designed for top-selling IBMs for their outstanding performance. Shown with Lolit are (from left) his husband; Simon Hemus, Sara Lee direct selling worldwide president; Ricky Sy, House of Sara Lee Philippines general manager and Perry Mogar, Sara Lee direct selling Asia president.

LOCAL WEBSITES' CLAMOR

'Enough of sugar-coated test-drive articles'



DRIVE.COM.PH: "Upgrade perfor-mance tests"

(Second of two parts)

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

WE don't want our vehicle re-views to sound like product endorsements, because that is not motoring journalism."

"By becoming a source of unbiased evaluations of cars and car products, our aim is to provide consumers with information that will help them get the best value for their money and to provide manufacturers and service providers with a credible, third party feedback mechanism that will help them improve."

"We need to upgrade the way we conduct performance tests of vehicles. A radar gun, for instance, is an indispensable tool for performance tests."

"...A genuine avenue of participation between buyers and sellers."

3 common denominators

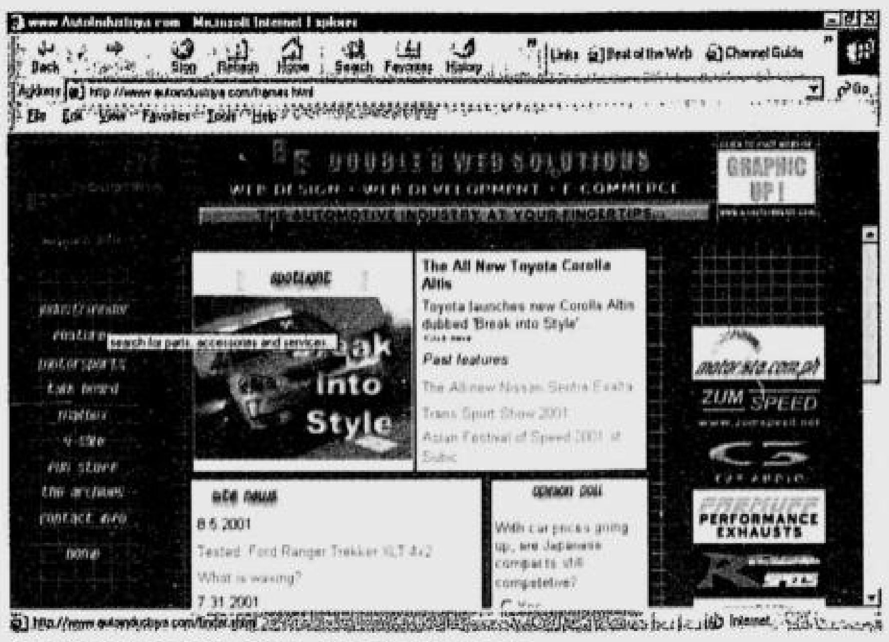
These and other snippets of "hair-raising" idealism from Philippine automotive websites reveal their three common denominators: the desire to educate motorists into becoming informed vehicle buyers; a genuine venue for readers to air gripes about substandard automotive products; and a venue for auto firms to improve themselves.

Not that there's always something wrong with the auto manufacturers and their "toys." Not that fun test-drive articles couldn't be found in these websites.

It's just that someone has to get downright serious with serious machines.

These websites claim the responsibility of creating the safety nets for the buying public also rest heavily on motoring journalists. Online journalists from around the world (or what we now call webcasters) feel this weight on their shoulders—and welcome the responsibility, in fact.

After all, if you consider parting with your hard-earned six-to-seven figure 5-year savings for something that inevitably depreciates in value over time not a laughing matter, then local auto websites autoindustriya.com, carz.com.ph, drive.com.ph and kotse.com would agree with your sentiments 100 percent.



The All New Toyota Corolla Altis

Toyota launches new Corolla Altis dubbed 'Break into Style'

Past features

The All-new Nissan Sentra Exalta

Trans Sport Show 2001

Asian Festival of Speed 2001 at Subic

8 5 2001

Tested: Ford Ranger Trekker XLT 4x2

What is waxing?

7 31 2001

With car prices going up, are Japanese compacts still competetive?

AUTOINDUSTRIYA.COM: End users' venue

For autoindustriya.com, car manufacturers need a means of enabling end-users to communicate with them.

"When we receive complaints about poor service or poor quality cars, we immediately forward these to the corresponding manufacturers. But whether or not the manufacturers take such rants and raves seriously is out of our hands," said Autoindustriya's Benj Ngo.

Carz.com.ph, which will have a snazzier domain name Carz.ph, dreams Filipino readers would find more "professionally conducted test drives" and "very substantial vehicle reviews complete with ratings based on independent judgment." Carz.ph's Conrad Cariño cited American and European car magazines where track tests are also standard.

"I think carmakers should improve the delivery of their services and quality of products. We get some e-mails complaining about certain car markets delivering poor services and products. To me this is quite sad," said Cariño.

Carz, which is also designing a new look to add more appeal to its website, claims 500 to 600 hits per day. Its contents are updated every two weeks.

PROS and cons ratings for Carz.ph

Educating motorists on driving safely, proper maintenance and purchases of automotive products and services are drive.com.ph's priority for now. Next on its to-do list are to promote "environmentally sound motoring" and, of course, to entertain. Editor in chief Eric Soriano hopes injecting technology tools in test evaluations would become standard.

"One of the deficiencies in Philippine media is the lack of a critical yet objective evaluator of products. This is true not just for the auto industry but for all industries. This is where Kotse.com hopes to make its mark," said kotse.com's president and CEO Jay Diego.

'Have a good time'

A venue for both experts and nonexperts to interact, share knowledge and generally "have a good time" is what kotse.com hopes to bring.

Apart from becoming a "strong advocate for automotive consumers' rights," Drive.com.ph's Soriano thinks the country needs more fuel-efficient vehicles and less "counterflowing" drivers.

Autoindustriya's Ngo would love to have law and order strictly enforced on Philippine highways.

It looks like local auto websites are keen on leaving skid marks on manufacturers' and consumers' consciousness. Will the Internet—with all its potentials and limitations—allow them?

Driver distraction

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

OTTAWA, Ontario, Canada—The organization that represents four million motorists in Canada is concerned about several big issues this year and driver distraction leading to road accidents is one of the most challenging. David Flewelling, president of the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA), says that the issue of driver distraction is broader in nature than using a mobile telephone while driving. "Children fighting in the back seat, changing a CD or the station of the car radio, putting on make-up or tying a necktie while driving distracts the driver just as much as using a cell phone," Flewelling pointed out.

Flewelling, who replaced Brian A. Hunt as CAA president recently, narrates that while driving at around 8 a.m. one day last week, he noticed that the car behind him was weaving from one side of the road to the other as if its driver were under the influence of liquor. It was too early in the day for drunk drivers to hit the road, so he looked at his rearview mirror—an act that in itself distracted him—to find out why, and saw the driver tying his necktie while driving. Flewelling claims he has also seen women applying make-up while driving almost as often as motorists of both sexes using the cell phone while driving.

There has been talk of outlawing the use of the cell phone while driving in the province of Ontario, but CAA believes that the better approach is to educate people on how to use the cell phone responsibly while in-vehicle (stop your vehicle and pull over to a safe location before dialing and conversing on a phone). This would be part of CAA's traffic safety education project. As a respected safety leader, the 88-year-old CAA educates the public on safe driving, on the proper use of air bags and seatbelts and on sharing the road with trucks and cyclists; coordinates the School Safety Patrol Program in partnership with schools, communities and police forces across Canada; lobbies for improved road and vehicle safety standards.

Another issue that concerns CAA members is the condition of the roads and highways in Canada (although, as I told Flewelling, the roads in Ottawa are perfect compared to ours in Metro Manila). Flewelling says that CAA will encourage the government to use the revenue from gasoline taxes to maintain and repair the roads. After all, gasoline taxes were imposed in the late 1950s ostensibly for road maintenance and repair. Flewelling says he drives frequently between Montreal and Ottawa (where CAA's headquarters are located) and the highway is not in the condition it should be. CAA campaigns for and supports legislation that secures proper funding, maintenance and development of Canada's highways. A cross-Canada campaign to rebuild the National Highway conducted by CAA and partner organizations influenced 77 Members of Parliament to raise the highway issue in the House of Commons.

The annual Member Opinion Survey conducted by CAA last year identified drunk drivers as the greatest threat to their personal safety on the road. Motorists convicted of drunken driving lose their driver's license and undergo a rehab and educational program. Flewelling revealed that one of the important new ways of controlling drunk driving is the installation of a sensoring device in the motor vehicle that monitors and measures the driver's breath when he gets into the car. "If the driver is sober, the car will start. If the driver is drunk, it won't," Flewelling explains. Already, there are laws in two of Canada's provinces stipulating that this device be installed in the vehicles of those who have been convicted of drunk driving. Two more provinces are thinking of passing the same law. "Experience shows that most drunk drivers are repeat offenders who have been arrested more than once," he says. "In fact, many convicted drivers have volunteered to have the device installed in their cars."

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Stop repeat offenders. Don't reelect them.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@yahoo.com

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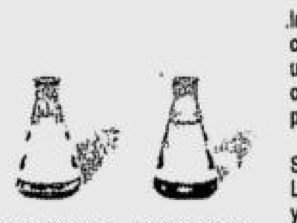
Now, about mutts. Well, mutts will be mutts. You know what we mean.



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OPEL ASTRA

Value with a German accent

By Tessa R. Salazar and Raymond Tribdino

OPEL Astra

THERE aren't too many Opel Astras around.

Its steep price tag makes sure of its controlled scarcity. This, in turn, assures it of its prized status and snooty appeal.

But rare as it is, the 1.6-liter Astra is still considered a best-seller in its niche. The Astra is the base platform of the badge engineered of the Vauxhall and Holden, two General Motors brands in Australia, Britain and other right-hand drive markets. This alone should speak volumes about Opel's engineering prowess and integrity.

It is a brand not known for shabbiness. The Astra confirms that proof of the pudding is in the driving. Or something like that.

New format

Raymond: The Opel Astra brings together the automotive expertise of the Germans with the production and distribution capabilities of the Americans. But mind you, this is not a wimpy American sedan. This is tough-as-a-Panzer, sharp-as-Solingen car complete with English translations of essential documentation.

Tessa: Starting this issue, we depart from our usual "he said, she said" format.

Raymond: Hey, can you stop with the preamble and let's whip the Astra.

Tessa: Our new format includes feedback from other test drivers, vehicle owners, chauffeurs and passengers (really professional passengers).

Occasionally, we'll invite our fellow motoring journalists and readers to give their 10 cents' worth. Now, move over, Raymond, I'll drive.

Not Japanese

Tessa: There are control switches that I had to get used to. The headlight switch, for example, I found on the left side away from the steering wheel. While shifting the gear to back up, I had to pull up a ring below the stick shift and position the stick to the second gear position. That's pretty alien. Things like that delay a pleasurable ride for a few seconds. What do you think Attorney Marcelo?

Attorney Marcelo: It's perfect.

Raymond: I agree. This car oozes with the autobahn, German lager and Walther PPKs (the last one in reference to the faux polished metal finishes inside the car). You know you aren't in a Japanese sedan. The craftsmanship is precise, and so is the shifter, one of the finest pieces I've ever tried. I rate ergonomics with maximum points, but does rear legroom suffer a bit? Do you have any gripes, Attorney?

Attorney Marcelo: Like I said, it is perfect.

Autobahn speeds

Raymond: The needle darted way beyond the 180 kilometers per hour mark, and the engine still had enough to spare for a final push before I ran out of concrete. About 195 kph.

It is on the silky side but can thin out those tires pretty quickly. The ECOTEC engine is not the most powerful but harnesses the energy it takes in well. And disperses it well, too. There's terrific grip all around and enough stopping power. The accelerator pedal is a bit hard to squeeze, though.

Throw it into a particularly hard corner, and you realize just how rigid the whole package is. Well, the suspension is a bit on the firm side. But not go-kart bumpy, neither is it Opel Tigra marshmallowy. Not Japanese either. Can you describe the ride, Tessa?

Tessa: Stable but not hard. And, yes, GM claims this car runs on a robust 1.6-liter ECOTEC engine and the latest Euro-4 emission control system.

Attorney Marcelo: This is the best car I've ever driven. It is so stable at 180 kph. I've never driven anything like it.

Raymond: Try a Porsche.

Euro styling

Tessa: This is the Opel sedan right? I keep seeing its wagon sibling on the road. Anyway, Opel Astra, the sedan, is typically Opel, for me. Or should I say typically European? Heavy doors. I don't have that much muscle myself, so I didn't like it. The solid thud of the doors closing, that I liked. A short and thick antenna on the back side of the roof of the car is very distinct of Opel Astra. Cool. But I found the front less appealing for me even with its trapezoidal grille. One cool safety feature: Power window resistance sensor, which keeps fingers from being squeezed when the windows go up.

Raymond: It does not follow the rounded, bulbous contours of most Japanese sedans. This design dates back to about 1997, which evolved from the square-edged version four years earlier. Though the corners are nicely rounded where it matters, it is beginning to look aged when beside the more youthful Nippon compacts. That does not mean I don't like it. It is cornered where it counts, like a Hummer or a Kubelwagen.

Attorney Marcelo: I wish they put a "door ajar" indicator.

Raymond: Finally.

Opel's Astra gets a well-deserved **7 out of 10 total points.** Major shares of the standings go to overall package, engine, drive train and rigid chassis. Styling is now a bit stodgy and we're waiting for the Opel's new design for the 2002 Astra.

It has one of the best manual gearboxes we've toyed around with. Outstanding throttle response and top-rate steering put it as one of the fastest, silkiest cars that have passed through our greasy hands. Owners complain of lack of service centers, but GM Autoworld has since remedied this. Other owner gripes: Cost and availability of spare parts, difficult to accessorize, insurance premiums. But heck, if we had money to burn, we'll gladly part with our cash for this German metal in the garage.

(Thanks to lawyer Rey Marcelo of SGV, an Astra owner.)

Sprinting at Subic

BY RAYMOND TRIBDINO

(Second of two parts)

ROUND 2 brought the rally to Subic Bay.

It started off with the sun smiling at them, but ended with a downpour the likes of which only Subic can offer. The event was held at the Subic Bay Naval Magazine, a favorite off-road course for both rally and 4x4 off-road drivers.

Team Orange juiced the pack (pardon the pun) and finished first with 10 points, temporarily giving it the lead in the series. But teammates Arnel Doria of Honda, Aris Ilagan of Manila Bulletin and BusinessWorld's Marvin Tort agreed that it was navigator Tammy Mendoza of the Philippine Star who co-piloted everyone to victory. Tammy's error-free navigation and crystal clear directions were responsible for the team's good showing in Round 2.

Team Black brought together Gadget's Andy Leuterio and Brian Afuang of Rev magazine with Ron de los Reyes of Auto Review and Jess Reyes of dzRH.

But the fun wasn't all with the top placers.

Tintin and Anjo fell into a ditch somewhere, extricating themselves from the mess they were in.

"Push Tin-tin," Anjo shouted. Push the throttle, he meant. The Manila Bulletin reporter took care of the rear end of the City, as Honda's Reyes balanced throttle and steering. The tandem managed to clear the ditch and complete the course but earned only two points for this round, putting them in fourth place behind Team Red.

Typhoon Perez

While typhoon Ising was busy battering other parts of the country, bringing biting cold and buckets of water to the final stage of the City Rally Sprint, another typhoon was whizzing away through the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Cavite.

Typhoon Perez (the Anjo variety) was blasting away at the competition, serious in making up for their podium deprivation in the last round.

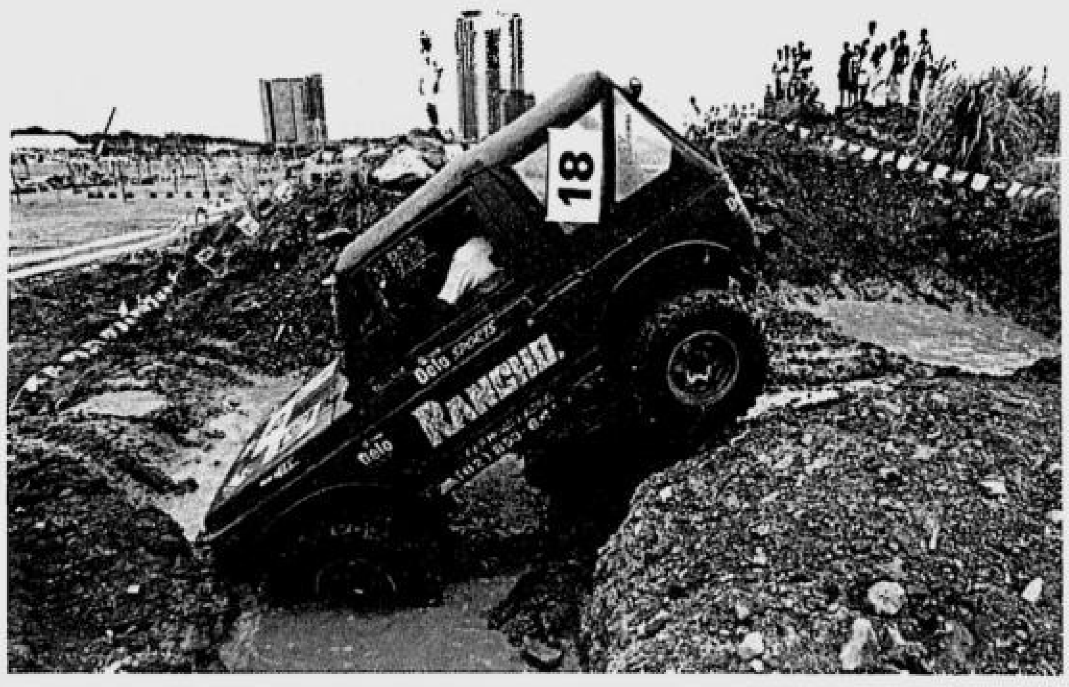
The already tricky night tarmac rally was made more treacherous by the slippery conditions. Covering a total of 102.4 kilometers with 56.5km of special stages, participants were flagged off at 5 p.m. for a race that would last until the wee hours.

Slick tarmac conditions did not deter Team White from submitting a 43 minutes 35 seconds total time. Team Orange sought to defend its lead but ended up a close second with a total time of 46 minutes 14 seconds.

Two teams failed to finish the rally due to separate incidents in the 16.45 km Special Stage 8. Team Black ended its bid for the championship when the tandem of Leuterio and De los Reyes rammed into an embankment, wrecking their car's front and rear suspension. Meanwhile, Team Red DNF'd due to suspension trouble. The tandem of Cacanindin and Romero hit embankments in SS 3 and SS 8 where their front suspension finally gave way.

Honda Cars Philippines sponsored the ADBM Resources-organized event. Activity Asia Association and Roadwise Motoring School provided the technical backing. Official tires were from Bridgestone and Firestone shod on Rota alloy wheels. Nodalo's took good care of the rolling cars and AITECH dressed up the vehicles in true rally livery.

I am now looking forward not just to cover the next City Rally Sprint, but to storm it, too.



MAN AND MACHINE

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

The owner of a 4x4 vehicle tests his skills and his machine as he negotiates a difficult obstacle course at The Fort in Makati City. The event was the elimination round of the Luzon selection of the Caltex Delo Rainforest Challenge.

Windshield crack repair cheaper than replacement

ANDY Tabios, general manager of Manila Midwest Windshield Repair in Makati, calls them stars, bull's eyes and cracks and they are the result of BB's, pebbles and other debris hitting a vehicle's windshield, usually when following a truck on the expressway.

Tabios sought out this business of repairing cracks in one of his various business trips to the United States. He said windshield damage can be annoying at best and dangerous at worst. But rather than spending between P15,000 and P80,000 to replace your original laminated windshield, you can have it repaired for a fraction of the replacement cost.

Repair is a lot cheaper and faster, supports the environment and is safer (than replacing your laminated glass to tempered) because laminated is the international standard. In changing the windshields of cars, which are equipped with airbags, the sealing compound must be compatible with the original, otherwise, the airbags would fail upon impact. Repair doesn't need to remove the windshield, so your factory seal remains intact. No leaks or air noise.

After the crack, star or bull's-eye have been repaired, it's barely detectable. People know their cars and where a crack is but if you were to show a repaired windshield to someone unfamiliar with the car, he or she would have a hard time finding it. It is accurate to say that the damaged look is minimized from 75 to 90 percent while the strength is restored 100 percent. All works are covered by 5 years minimum written warranty.

About 90 to 95 percent of all cracks can be repaired if brought on time. The Manila Midwest Windshield Repair holds the international patent for long crack repair.

For more information, you may reach the firm through Tel. Nos. 926-6829, 851-0062, 435-6391 or e-mail manilavent@ao.com. Its services are available in key cities nationwide.

GM, US Embassy pitch in for charity

FULL TANK

Al S. Mendoza

HERE IS another gem from Arnel Doria of Honda. He e-mailed this to me last week:

LOS ANGELES—Today's sentencing of a San Jose woman to three months in jail for leaving her children in a locked car trunk while she worked is the most extreme example of what some parents do from time to time by leaving their children unattended in the car, according to the Automobile Club of Southern California.

"Children under four years of age seem to be the most at risk for having their lives endangered by being left in a hot car for any length of time," said Steven Bloch, Ph.D., senior research associate for the Automobile Club of Southern California.

"Incidents appear to be equally distributed in three groups: children intentionally left in a car by an adult, children forgotten because of adult confusion or impairment and children locking themselves in a car while at play."

Currently, there is no national data that follows the number of children who die every year from being left in a vehicle. Doctors warn that if outside temperature is 90 degrees Fahrenheit, it could be 110°F inside a car. Within minutes the temperature can climb to 150°F or more. In a short time, a child can become dehydrated with the body's internal temperature climbing above 107°F. Even five minutes locked in an overheated car may be too much for a small child.

The Auto Club urges motorists:

- Never leave a child unattended in a car, even for a minute.
- If you see a child locked in a car, immediately call 911 for emergency assistance.
- Get the child to a hospital emergency room as soon as possible.
- Never try to treat the heatstroke at home with cold water or cooling the child in a tub of water. Only a specialist should treat heatstroke.

Sometimes, we also lock dogs in a car. This is dangerous. Dogs become traumatized inside a car and, as a result, they usually resort to destroying the car seats, if not scratching the doors and locked windows. A more dangerous practice is leaving a child in a car in the company of a dog. Don't ever do this even if only for a few minutes. A dog will always be a beast; you'll know what will happen. Never take risks. Never gamble the life of your child.

Thank you once more, Arnel. For all the thoughts, kindness, that you've been doing to me, I'll now have to call your challenge: Yes, I'm ready to kill that bottle of red wine. Name the place and I'll come running.

Ciao.

* * *

Cheers to General Motors for recently supporting the recent US Embassy Independence Day Golf Tournament at Santa Elena. The tournament, with GMPh president and general manager Harold Koh as its spearhead, helped raise funds for charitable institutions.

The beneficiaries of the event were Project Smile, which supports cleft-lip and cleft-palate surgery for indigent children through the Craniofacial Foundation; Home of Joy, a Tondo home for the sick, disabled and abandoned children; and, Friendship House, a shelter for homeless children.

Organized by the US Embassy Golf Association, the event will also benefit community development projects around the country that provide emergency food and assistance for provincial communities as part of their disaster relief efforts.

* * *

I call it the Battle of Pickups. It's been raging for some time now.

Today, Ford Group Philippines will launch the 2001 F-150 Supercrew 4x4 at 6 p.m. at Dencio's Grill at The Fort in Makati. Who said the automotive industry is in a slump?

Many of my friends have fallen in love with the pickup.

Jake my neighbor now drives a Nissan Frontier. Benny my golf buddy has bought a fleet of Isuzu Fuegos, the same brand that my Pareng Gob (Manny Piñol of North Cotabato) used to drive before he got a van. Dayong my son remains in love with his Toyota pickup, which he bought some years back at Ray Oben's Toyota Balintawak, the many-time winner of the Dealer of the Year Award.

To Maricar C. Parco and her Fordmates, all the best.

* * *

QUOTE ME: **Your front tires should always be 2-4 pounds lighter than your rear tires.**

Banaue and beyond with Shell-Citibank Gold MasterCard

SHELL-CITIBANK Gold MasterCard, the preferred credit card of motorists, in cooperation with Ford Motors, recently went on a Northern Adventure Tour in a bid to demonstrate the card's unique features.

Leading the pack were Citibank's assistant vice president Sonya Perez-Bernas and program manager Mon del Rosario, and Pilipinas Shell's Roel Cruz, head of its loyalty programs for private motorists.

Together with other adventure seekers, the team left Manila on board Ford Explorer Sport Tracs and Ford Rangers and headed for Banaue. Armed with freshly minted Shell-Citibank Gold MasterCard credit cards, they loaded up on Shell fuel, which will earn them a 2-percent rebate on their total transaction.

As the trip progressed, Shell-Citibank Gold MasterCard proved to be a worthy companion—accepted in dining establishments along the route plus in the hotels where the group stayed. From Banaue, the group proceeded to Cagayan to visit caves and for some kayaking and rappelling. Last stop was Kalinga where the group braved the white-water rapids.

Created for the discriminating motorists, the Shell-Citibank Gold MasterCard offers cardholders superior motoring privileges and the recognition they deserve to fit their sophisticated and fast-paced lifestyles.

With Shell-Citibank Gold MasterCard, cardholders enjoy free vehicular registration service, free basic car check-up, 24x7 roadside assistance and free towing services on arrangement with Wheelers Club International. They also get the best deals on automobile insurance coverage from Citicorp Financial Services Brokerage Inc. Also. cardholders can avail of the PayLite Installment Plan for purchases worth P5,000 or more, FastLink payment option for utility bills and online banking convenience with CitiDirect at www.citibank.com.ph.

And there's more! Your Shell--Citibank Gold MasterCard can give you high credit lines as much as P625,000, membership to the Gold Exclusives program for discounts and benefits in over 180 establishments nationwide, as well as free access to Northwest WorldClubs lounges in 22 airports worldwide.

To jumpstart your adventure, apply now for a Shell-Citibank Gold MasterCard and get as much as P1,400 worth of free Shell fuel as a welcome gift upon approval. Once you get your credit card, use it with any of the participating tour organizers and over 21 million establishments worldwide in over 300 countries and hie off to your own exhilarating Shell fuel-rebating trip.

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Automaker introduces first gas-fed fuel cell

TRAVERSE CITY, Michigan—The same fuel-cell technology that automakers are developing in hopes of producing pollution-free vehicles may also be the answer to preventing power blackouts, a General Motors Corp. executive said Tuesday.

In a statement distributed to reporters at an industry conference here, Larry Burns, GM vice president for research and development planning, said for the past six months the automaker has been testing a stationary fuel cell-powered generator at its Rochester, New York research facility.

The fuel cell generator GM is testing extracts hydrogen from either natural gas, methane or gasoline. The hydrogen is then mixed with oxygen from the air and the fuel cell converts it to electricity.

"With a fuel cell, there wouldn't be power failures, or, at the very least, the likelihood should be greatly reduced," Burns said in the statement.

Burns said natural gas is the fuel of choice for home applications of the stationary units since many US homes are already hooked up to natural gas service, and since an infrastructure of pipelines delivering the fuel now exists.

The company envisions dozens of homes or businesses being powered by one fuel-cell generator. That same generator could also be used to recharge the batteries of electric vehicles.

Major step

GM also announced a major step in the development of fuel cell-powered vehicles with the unveiling of the first gasoline fuel processor for fuel cell propulsion.

The Gen III processor, mounted on a Chevrolet S-10 pickup truck, extracts hydrogen from gasoline, creating electric power much the same as the stationary units, with the added benefit of powering a vehicle.

GM claims the Gen III, when combined with the fuel cell stack, has the potential to obtain 40 percent overall energy efficiency—about 50 percent more efficient than a conventional internal combustion engine.

Incremental step

The S-10 fuel cell generates 25 kilowatts, which translates roughly into 33 horsepower, the company said.

That's considered an incremental step in the technology since gasoline-fed fuel cell vehicles are not pollution-free, as are fuel cell vehicles fed with pure hydrogen.

However, on-board hydrogen tanks are extremely heavy, as they must be strong enough to prevent the highly flammable gas from exploding in the event of a crash. Automakers are working with outside companies to help solve that problem.

Other challenges to a quick conversion to hydrogen are the cost of the technology and an insufficient network of filling stations.

GM says it will begin driving demonstrations of the gasoline-fed fuel cell-powered pickup truck in the United States early next year.

Earlier this year Burns said the year 2010 would be the earliest that hydrogen-fed fuel cell vehicles could be available.

AP

Petron's Northern Luzon promo on

DRIVING up North? Refuel at a Petron station along the way for a hassle-free trip and a chance to win in Petron's Rev, Raffle and Roll promo.

Residents of Northern Luzon, as well as visiting motorists, can join the raffle promo that runs from Aug. 1 to Nov. 3. Every single or accumulated receipt purchase of P100 on Blaze, XCS, Unleaded and Regular gasoline, or P200 on Diesel and Kerosene, from any participating Petron service station in North Luzon, entitles the customer to a raffle coupon. Completely filled-up raffle entries must be dropped off only at the same station, where the fuel was purchased.

Great prizes are at stake in the three monthly draws and the grand draw. To be given away each month are 14 Panasonic 21'' CTV, 21 Nokia 3330 cell phones with sim pack, 35 Petron Lubricants and specialty gift packs, 35 Maglite with Swiss knife, 35 warning lamps, and 35 Mesh sunshades.

Winners in the grand draw will have the privilege of owning a Toyota Revo or any of the 7 Kawasaki Motorcycles with sidecar, 1 Kubota Hand Tractors, or 21 Hao Qing Hoppers.

Nonwinning entries in the monthly draws automatically qualify for the grand draw. Monthly draws are scheduled on the 10th of September, October and November. Entries must be in by the third of the month to qualify. The grand draw is set on Nov. 17.

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'Big 4' muscles Taiwan Cement out of local mart

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TAIWAN Cement Corp. of billionaire Jeffrey Koo has ceased its shipments of cement to the Philippines, bowing to intense bombardment of cheap imports by the "Big 4" cement players—Holderbank Financiere Glaris Ltd., Cemex SA, Lafarge SA and Blue Circle Industries Plc.—from the Philippines and South Korea to Taiwan.

In a letter to its customers, TCC president Rodney Lu said starting Aug. 1, his company "can no longer supply cement imported from Taiwan, and the company will instead distribute Apo Cement Corp. as replacement."

Apo Cement is owned by Cemex, which led the assault on TCC's home market, where the Mexican cement giant unloaded cement at $18 per metric ton, or P40 per 40-kilogram bag that severely threatened the viability of Taiwan's cement industry.

An industry source, who declined to be identified, said while Apo Cement was at the forefront of the foray on Taiwan's market, the cost of undertaking the attack, estimated at $26 million, was being shouldered by the Big 4.

Based on a compromise agreement between TCC and the Big 4, TCC will no longer ship cement to the Philippines while the Big 4 will stop its exports to Taiwan. From August to November this year, Apo Cement will not only supply TCC's silo at Manila Bay at the rate of 51,000 to 68,000 metric tons a month, it will also determine the ex-plant prices of cement.

TCC and its peers in Taiwan have also reportedly agreed to raise funds to buy out and mothball Lucky Cement, a grinding mill in Batangas owned by Taiwanese investors. The Big 4 allegedly threatened TCC that it would include imported clinker in the safeguard action being sought with the Department of Trade and Industry, and it would export to Taiwan 1.5 times what it would ship to the Philippines.

The raid on Taiwan's market began in June 2000, when the Big 4 bought two silos in Taiwan as a beachhead for their planned invasion. The Big 4 shipped cheap imports to Taiwan in September, with supplies initially coming from its Philippine plants. The source said the Big 4 further stepped up the pressure by bringing in more artillery from South Korea to drive down prices of cement in Taiwan in retaliation for the alleged dumping of TCC in the Philippines.

The source said the Big 4 used their financial clout to press major banks to cut credit lines to TCC in order to force the latter to halt its shipments to the Philippines.

The Big 4, through the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp., blamed TCC for dumping cement into the country in late 1999, which kept them from adjusting prices to reflect higher production costs.

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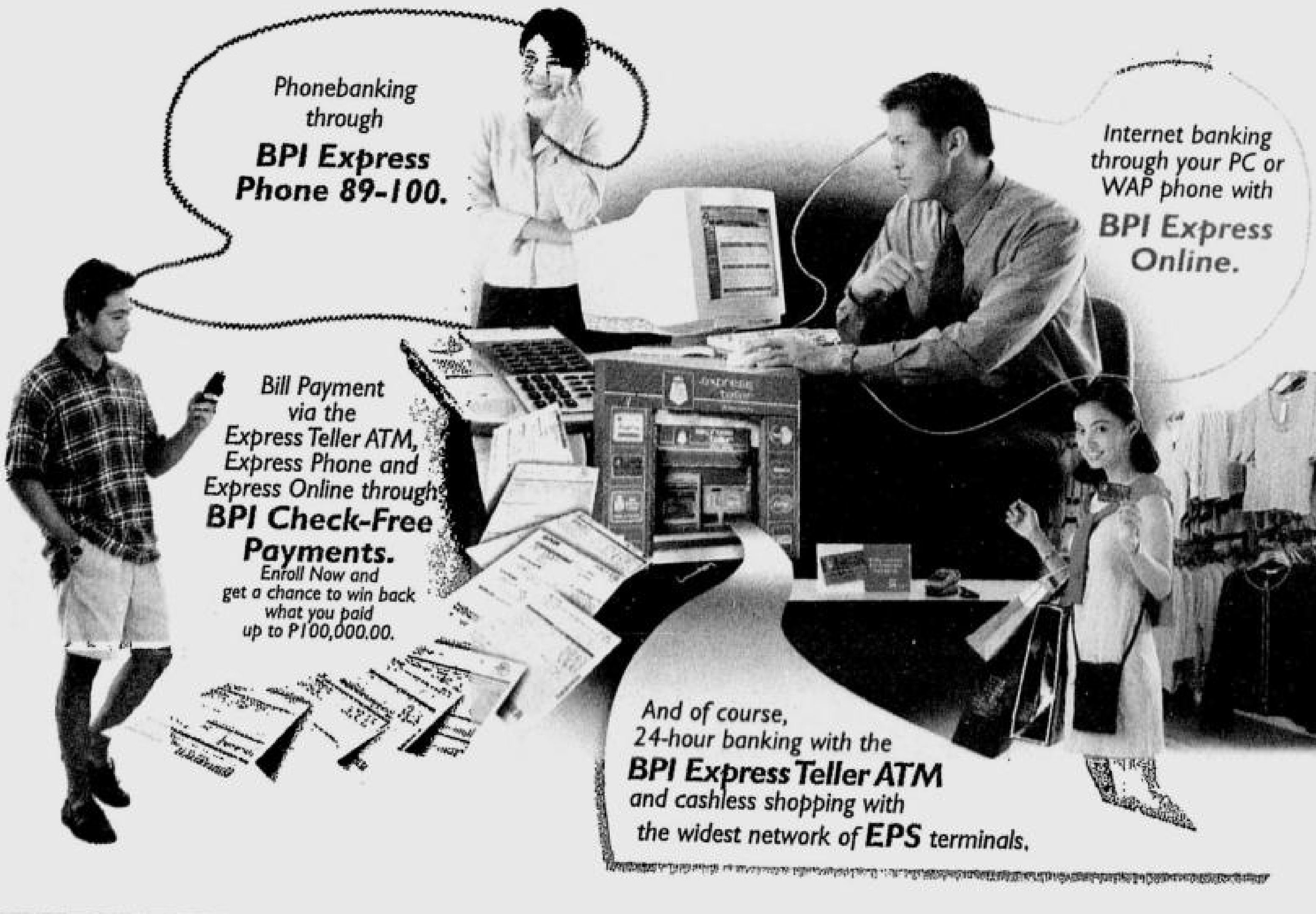

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LIFESTYLE
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

Star chef in concert

CHEFS these days are like rock stars. They are adored by fans from around the world, they smash balloon whisks instead of electric guitars in fits of passion, and they tour the world to do "gigs." Well, there's one rock star in town, albeit a still minor one in the firmament; but one would call him an up-and-coming indie band who's just signed a deal with a major studio. The studio in question is the Mandarin Oriental chain of hotels, and with this sort of backing behind him, this guy will make at least a few good albums before he's remixed into techno versions.

The food is described as "California cuisine," which is an immediate turnoff for people who are classicists and dislike everything about California, especially the fact that the weather's always sunny and "nice." And fusion food has a bad reputation in this city, in no small part due to its previous practitioners: the many now-defunct establishments with menu items that sound innovative and interesting when you read them, but on the plate look like pap for the toothless dropped from a great height.

Real food

Jason Plourde, who is from Silks in the Mandarin Oriental in San Francisco, pulls it off. The menu was, indeed, full of dubious-sounding "I-wonder-what-this-tastes-like" items. But when the food arrived, it looked reassuringly like real food, and not like something Pollock might have created if he had run out of paints and had to raid the refrigerator. The food was in copious quantities, and (a rarity in American cooking) actually had taste. The lobster bisque was among the richest one has ever imbibed: rich in terms of flavor, not of fat. A friend described it as fresh, warm milk that had been squeezed from the udder of an aquatic cow that lived on lobsters.

FLOWN in by Northwest Airlines from Silks Restaurant in San Francisco and now serving California cuisine at the Mandarin's Tivoli is Chef Jason Plourde.

The main course was somewhat anticlimactic, as main courses often are at innovative restaurants. But what it lacked in innovation, it made up for with sheer competence (which is not easy to find). One polished off every morsel of the beef, pink-in-the-center slices of lamb, and Maine lobster tails in an unctuous beurre blanc sauce with truffle butter. Plourde explained that the truffle butter was outrageously expen-

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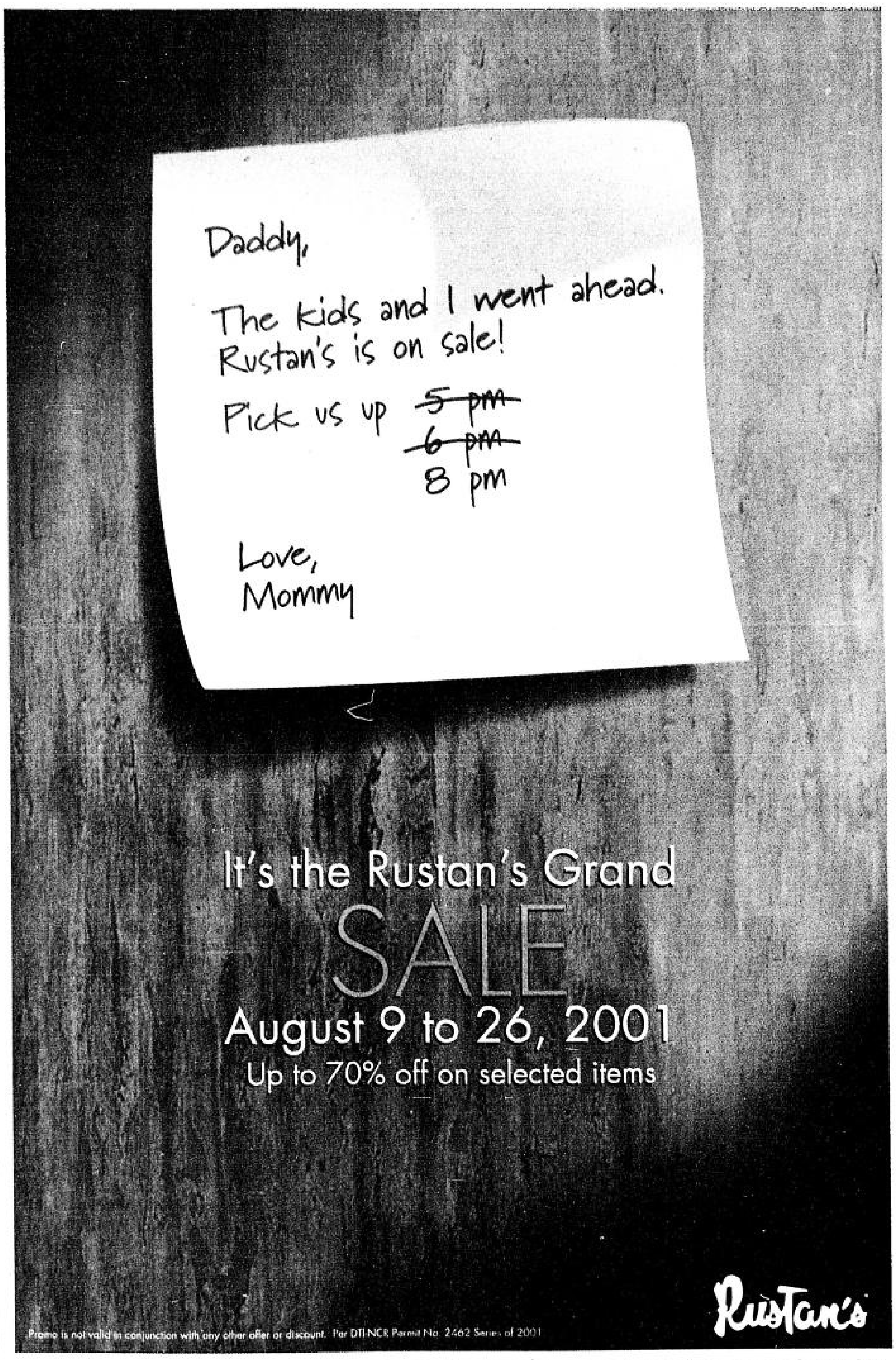

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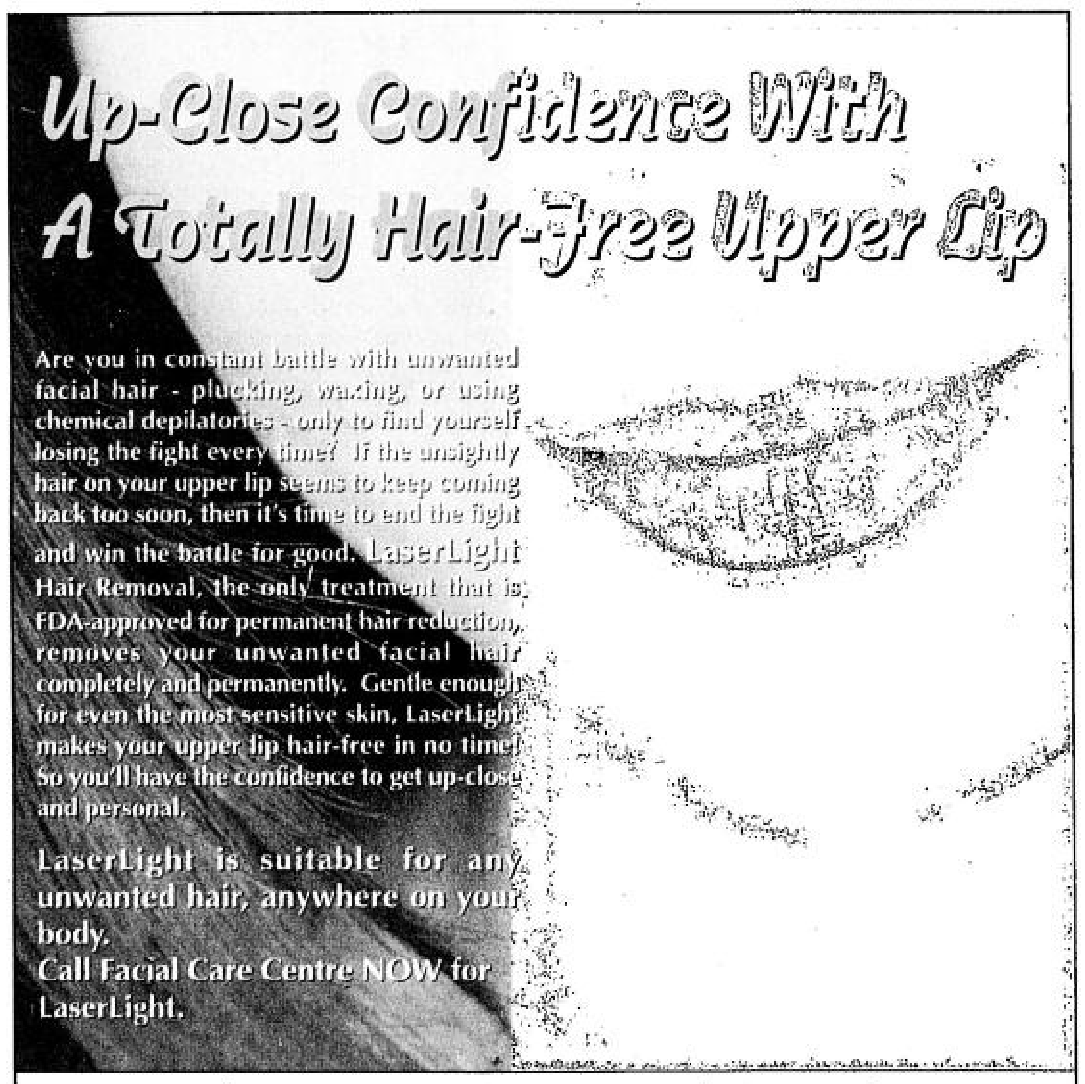
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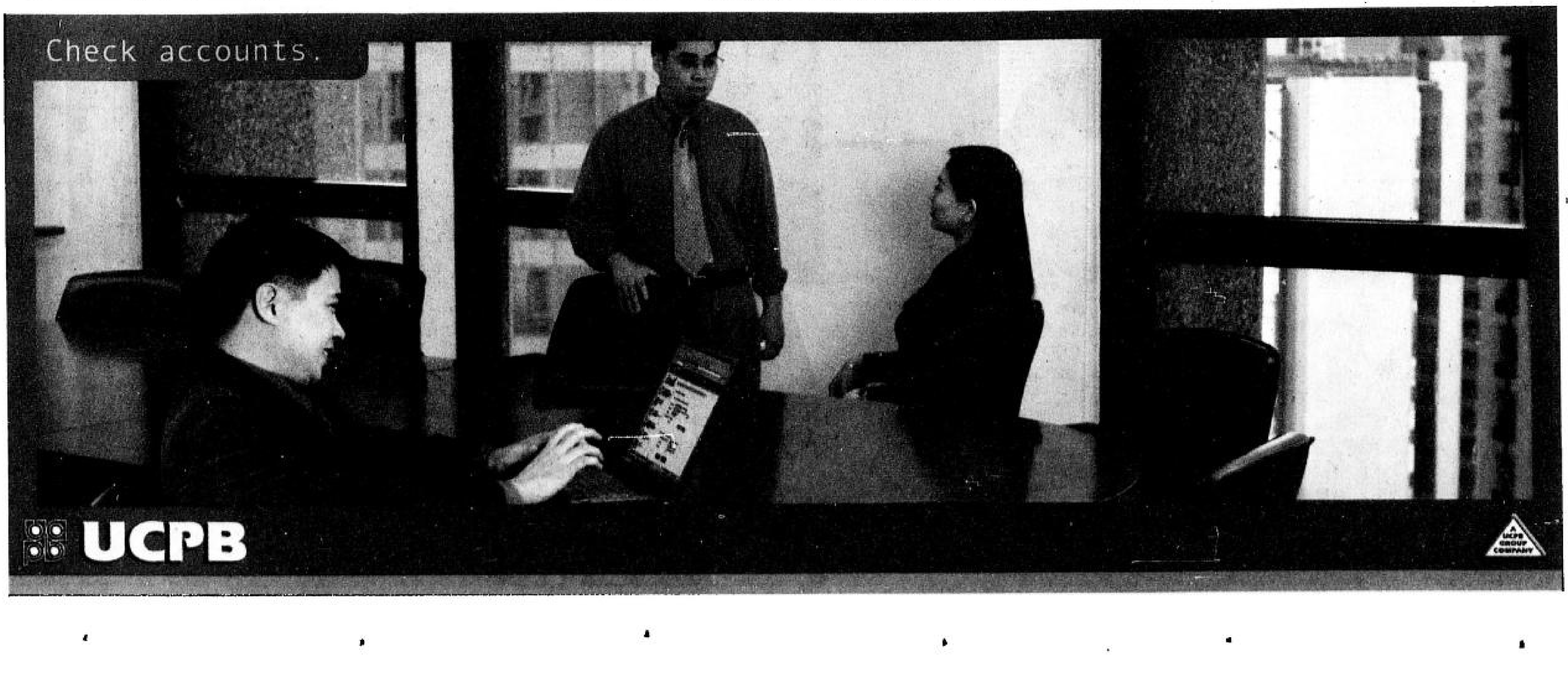
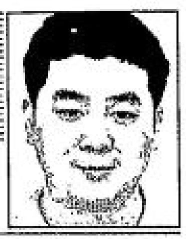


Purity vs complexity

THE MAD TEA PARTY



Clinton Palanca

THERE is only one absolutely certain way of making my dog stop barking once she starts, and that's to put Edith Piaf on the gramophone. I have an old wind-up Pathe, and after hours of scouring junk shops and making shady deals with other 78 rpm record collectors I met on the Internet, I managed to secure a good collection of Frank Sinatra, Josephine Baker and Edith Piaf. (I'm still looking for Noel Coward, though: if anyone out there has records lying around; do check if you own an original recording of "A Room With a View." I'll trade it for an authentic Burmese cowbell, which will be very useful in case you acquire a Burmese cow in the future.)

What is it about Edith Piaf that makes men weep and causes my terrier to cower behind the potted plants and whimper? The sound of her voice, somehow more poignant in scratchy, flat, non-stereo, brought to life by the vibrations of the needle tracing its way through the grooves more than half a century old, embodied who she was, an ethos that was a way of life for certain women of that time (Colette, of course, comes to mind): defiant, overflowing with desire and anger and passion, destined to die in an appropriately picturesque and tragic manner.

When you listen to her singing on the gramophone, you can barely hear the accompanying music in the background; it's just her voice. The songs she is most famous for have become clichés, churned out by organ-grinders in the tourist areas of Paris: but dispel for one moment the jaded cynicism, dissociate the song from those black-and-white Doisneau posters of lovers kissing and lonely park benches overlooking the Seine; try not to hear her awful English version; forget hearing the tunes in elevators or plucked out lazily by cocktail-lounge pianists. "La Vie en Rose": to see life through rose-colored spectacles; and in the end, to regret nothing.

From a musical point of view, there is nothing remarkable about her voice; actually, it's rather thin, and if you listen to an entire collection in one go, you can get a tremendous headache, and a strange desire to crouch behind potted plants and whimper. But her voice has purity. You can hear it on the 78's; you can hear it on the remastered editions: its purity of tone derives from its purity of soul.

True taste

In other related news, yesterday, I ate a Thai chicken curry. I was on my way back from Chiva-Som, and decided to stay an extra night in Bangkok to stock up on Thai ingredients. I will have more to say about the food at Chiva-Som in a future column: but let us simply say that after four days of spa cuisine, a green chicken curry, fiery hot, laced with kaffir lime leaves, paired with a gigantic platter of pad thai noodles glistening with oil, was a beatific experience. I have often wondered how Gandhi's first meal after his fasts tasted: a victory not just for his stomach, but for the freedom of India. I had less to celebrate, of course, but it did give me an impetus for this rumination on purity.

They say that spa-style cooking actually grows on you, and after a while, you'll be able to appreciate the true, natural purity of flavor that is the true essence of, say, a beet. To which I say: this is why people invented agriculture, cuisine and gastronomy. The easiest way to appreciate the true flavor of a beet or of a freshly slaughtered wildebeest would have been to remain hunter-gatherers. We cook and have a culture of gastronomy because we want flavor; we want our food to have taste. This is why we go to restaurants and eat "Terrine of cardamom-infused hock with juniper berry sauce on a buckwheat pancake with Provençal herbs and a raspberry jus" rather than chewing on heads of cabbage.

Every chef these days who appears on television or who has a glossy picture-book of recipes espouses fresh, natural ingredients and not drowning the "true" taste of these ingredients. The trend now is toward simplicity: organic vegetables, free-range poultry, cattle that have died happy deaths, line-caught fish, scallops collected by divers, all rushed to the restaurant's back door. But in our family, when we cook together (usually a chaotic, argumentative affair, since we all are in the kitchen at the same time, criticizing each other: I announce smugly that I went to Cordon Bleu; my father shouts that that he has eaten Chinese food for 72 years; my mother just has a very dominant personality) we have a saying: we talk of "pulling" or "tugging" the flavor out.

> You can choose curry with a melange of spices but, once in a while, it's nice to appreciate the unadorned flavor of an oyster straight out of the sea

Have you ever tried the best steak in the world, the porterhouse served at Peter Luger's in Brooklyn? It's nothing but well-aged beef, broiled in infernal heat and seasoned with salt and pepper. Imagine it without the salt and pepper, or the thin *jus* of oily drippings that conveys that incomparable beefy taste to your taste buds and your nose. The salt "pulls" the flavor from the beef; just as a thin coating of olive oil, a sprinkling of sea salt and a few strips of basil "pull" the flavor from a sun-ripened tomato and transform it from a plain squishy fruit into a heavenly summer salad.

Thai food, though, is not about simplicity. I once had a midnight craving for pad thai and tried to do a simplified version of it; I ended up with a salty mass of fried noodles redolent of fish sauce, a pasty white mass that could have been a queasy penguin's vomit. You can miss out on one or two ingredients if you can't find tamarind, or peanuts, or can't find chives, when making pad thai; but the more flavorings you leave out, the less it tastes like pad thai: and a well-made pad thai is a unique flavor. It's like a magic potion: if you leave out the nettle leaves or do it while Capricorn waxing rather than waning, you'll get something totally different.

Complexity

Edith Piaf is all very well while you're having tea with a couple of artsy-fartsy friends, but when I'm throwing a Friday night pre-outing party, there's nothing like techno to get people into a bouncy mood. I can already imagine the purveyors of taste rolling their eyes (yes, I know, techno is so last season): but like the clichés of Edith Piaf, the great techno anthems are worth hearing again, if only for the flashbacks. Techno is the opposite of Edith Piaf: it's not about the purity and directness of a single voice; it's about layering. After listening to Piaf, dig through your CDs and look for the Paul van Dyk album that you bought along with everyone else; or try Digweed or Oakenfold; and of course there's the inimitable Chicane. You can, if you like, try and count the layers and see where each iteration begins and ends, but what's the point? It's a wonderful noise to lose yourself in, just as you must savor the perfection of a well-made pad thai without attempting to disassemble its flavors.

These are obviously two different philosophies to cuisine; I understand and appreciate both, just as I like Edith Piaf and Kiri Te Kanawa as well as Gatecrasher, Ministry of Sound, and even those techno songs that became popular enough to become mobile telephone ringing tones. I learned from the Discovery Channel that termites eat wood thrice as fast when heavy metal music is playing (we can thus add structural safety to the many reasons to eschew heavy metal in general). My dog likes Paul Van Dyk: she pants frenziedly, her tongue hangs out, she runs around in circles, she leaps onto the dining table, and then she waves one paw in the air while waving a glow stick with the other, barking all the while. "Yes, yes," I say, stroking her, "I'm so glad I met you, too."

If you had to make me choose, I'd take complexity over simplicity, the melange of spices in a curry over the single flavor of fish baked with lemon. But I understand the allure of purity as well, and once in a while, it's nice to appreciate the unadorned flavor of an oyster straight out of the sea, or fill the room with the voice of a woman whose voice spoke her soul. It's also a good way of getting rid of the dog for a while.

E-mail the author at clinton@i-manila.com.ph

Say cheesecake

BY WALTER ANG

PATRONS of the Greenbelt cinemas can now have a bite to eat after the show and spend a few minutes discussing what they've just seen.

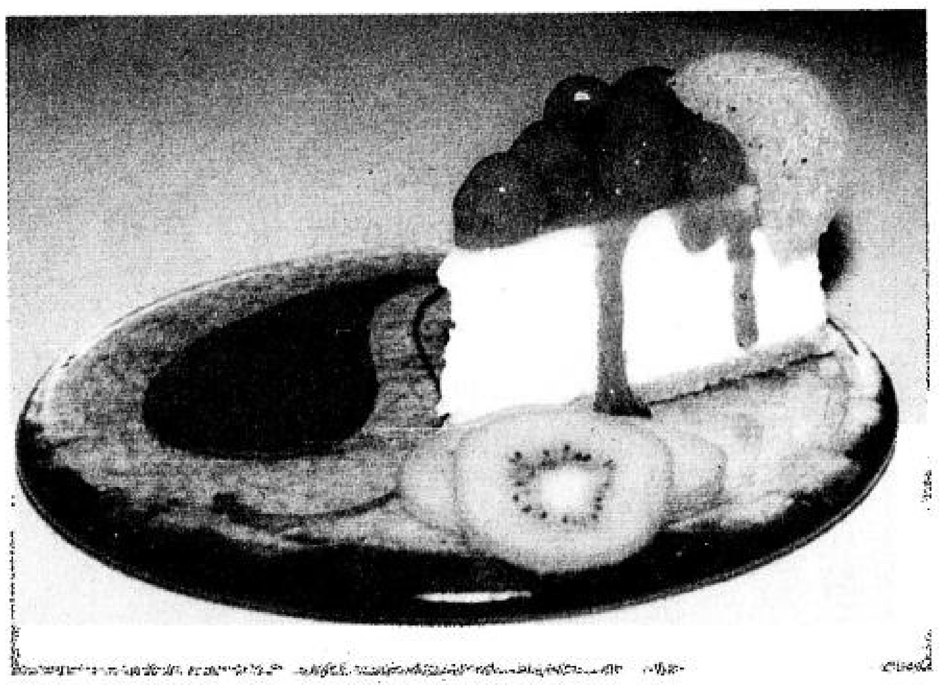
Cheesecake, Etc. is right beside the spanking new Onstage at Greenbelt. The interiors cast a warm glow with its orange walls. Brian Chua explains that the owners wanted the area to look refined and inviting. "Not too dark. We're not hiding anything."

He recounts how the restaurant came to be. Along with some of his relatives, the Go family, Chua had lived in Vancouver, Canada. One of their oft-visited hangouts was a dessert bar called Cheesecake, Etc. It was considered an institution, having been around for almost a quarter of a century. Its best-selling concoction was called Death by Chocolate.

When their stay in Canada was about to come to an end, the relatives got together and thought of packing up more than just their bags. Why not bring home their hangout? "The Philippines has an eating culture and we wanted to share this with the Filipinos," says Chua.

As early as April of last year, they explored the option of franchising the dessert bar, but the owner said he was too old to go into franchising. However, he did allow the enterprising family to work out a different kind of agreement. After forking over a one-time payment, the family walked away from the deal with permission to use the name and with some tricks of the trade to boot.

A consultant was hired to work out the details and train personnel. With that taken care of, Cheesecake, Etc. opened in Makati. To the delight of cheesecake lovers, there are six varieties of cheesecakes at this dessert bar: Belgian Double Cream, Café de Luna, White Chocolate Pistachio, Piña Colada Tropicale, Mango Passion and Berry Temptation.



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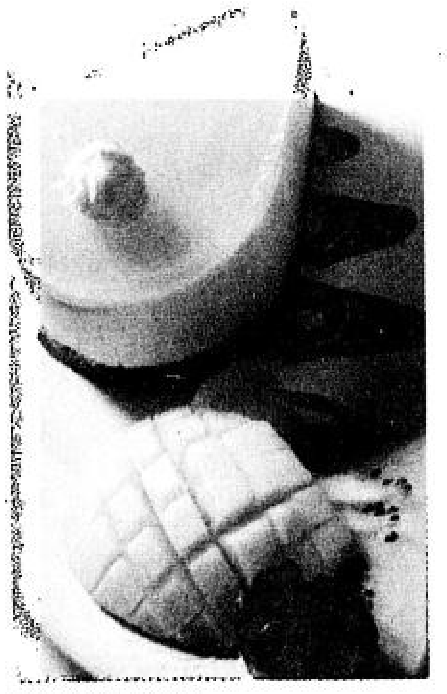

MANGO Passion

PIÑA Colada Tropicale

The newest flavor on the cheesy block, the low-fat Berry Blue, was introduced at the opening of the Alabang Town Center Cinema Square branch yesterday.

The bestseller at this first and only gourmet cheesecake shop in the country is the Belgian Double Cream, which is "fuller and richer [compared to other cheesecakes], and has a special sour cream topping," says Chua. "After you taste it, you'll say, 'Wow, *this* is cheesecake!'" But you don't have to take his word for it. Karen Go, his godsister, says one foreign customer sing its praises and claims that it's the best cheesecake he's had in Manila.

Only Philadelphia Cream Cheese is used at Cheesecake, Etc. and, unlike most other locally made cheesecakes, the flavor is incorporated in the cake itself, "so that the flavor is not just a topping."

For example, they use local mangoes for one of their cheesecakes, the Mango Passion. "The original recipe used Mexican mangoes and even then it already tasted good," shares Chua. So one can only imagine how much better their version tastes when made with golden Philippine mangoes.

Since opening in May, the place has seen its share of an eclectic crowd. "We've seen high school kids, 20-year-olds, whole families, baby boomers. It's just a cool place to hang out," enthuses Chua. "People come here to try it out and they say that this place is something else."

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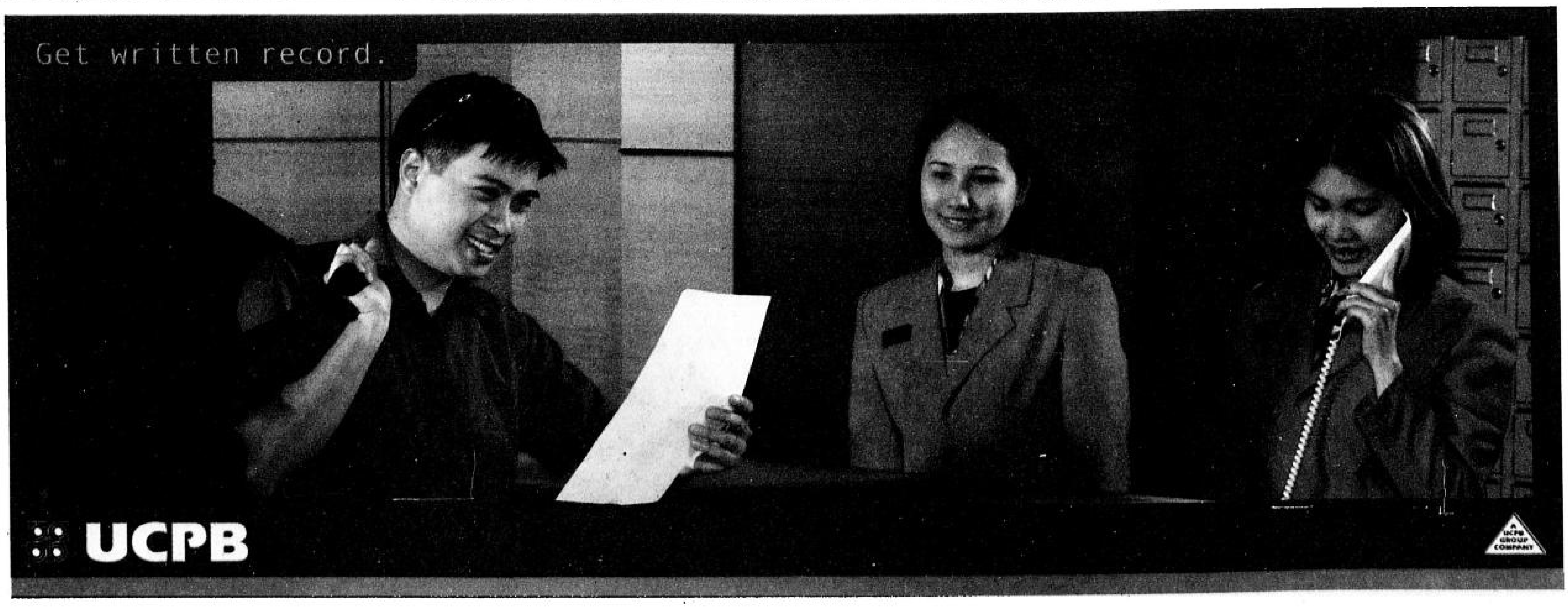
Star chef . . .

(From page C1)

sive; but, he pointed out, that was the advantage of working in hotel kitchens. "No need to count pennies," he said, gleefully. "The sky's the limit." Or one's imagination.

Plourde counts as one of his chief influences Charlie Palmer (of Aureole in New York). He believes firmly in the idea of California cuisine ("It blew my mind when I arrived there") and is convinced that, as a food genre, it's here to stay. It's a cuisine based on integration (which we have here) of Pacific Rim ideas with classical French techniques; but it's also a cuisine that depends greatly on freshness and quality of produce (something we don't have here). One was surprised at the firmness of the blueberries that appeared with the panna cotta, and the tautness of the lobster tails that signified a recent mortality. Like the best cuisine, its complexity melded into coherence: and a very delicious coherence, at that.

Since the mountain has come to Mohammed, or at least fairly close to his doorstep, one suggests that Mohammed make the short drive to the Mandarin for an excellent and surprisingly reasonably priced meal (the degustation menu is at P1,200). To return to the rock star analogy, it's not a concert that will blow your mind or change your life, but it will not fail to entertain; and, in the end, that's what music—and good food—is all about. *Clinton Palanca*



Reinventing the burger

(From page C4)

almost perfect and gives it four out of five stars.

Paolo Reyes' WHAM! Burger lives on Katipunan Avenue, southbound toward White Plains, in a primary-color-bright place decorated with framed covers of D.C. and Marvel comics. The classic Wham burger has a 1/3-pound charbroiled patty; the Double Whammy has two patties, and the Kapow is a "chili burger topped with salsa fresca, melted cheese, crunchy lettuce, a dab of *jalapeño* peppers and a chili sauce to die for." There is nothing, avers Paulo, like a "classic, charbroiled, 100 percent beef burger on a humid day, with fries and bottomless iced tea at hand at WHAM!"

Tony Cabanero reports on Bite Club, and prefaces this bid saying that his ideal burger must be cooked on a grill because it is healthier (than fried), and so that one can taste some of the charcoal with every bite; and it must sit in a bun with sesame seeds. His mozzarella burger with crisp bacon and lettuce inside was almost close to the ideal. He rated it four stars out of a possible five, because the bacon could have been more crisp, he judged.

Three minutes or less

My Flamers Blue Cheese and Bacon (the cheese a sauce; the bacon in crisp strips) half-pound burger was one of a dozen choices: plain, cheeseburger, Bacon Cheddar, BBQ Swiss, Cajun Cheese, Mushroom Swiss, Tex-Mex, Salisbury (topped with friend egg; served with gravy), Triple Cheese (American, Swiss and melted Cheddar), Pizza and Pepper Swiss. I thought it was perfect.

It was cooked by the restaurant owner himself, Ricky Sare, who is a hands-on chef working at the grill, and making sure the burgers come off it in three minutes or less. Hot volcanic rocks provided the smoky aroma, and the burger tasted as if it had just come off a coal fire. Drinks are bottomless: the toppings and dressings bar comprehensive.

Large appetites may venture into the Monster Burgers (1 pound of double burgers), the newest being Quadzilla, "the biggest, heaviest burger in the world," consisting of four half-pound patties with the works: two slices American cheese, two slices Swiss cheese, two bacon strips, BBQ sauce, mushroom sauté, Cajun spices, all lathered with melted Cheddar cheese. The Quadzilla challenge: "Finish a Quadzilla combo in 30 minutes or less and win a gift certificate from Flamers."

RICKY Sare, Flamers' owner-chef

Ricky Sare also promises that very soon, Flamers will be open for breakfast from 6-10 a.m., with the works: cereals, pancakes or French toast, omelets, "Breakfast Heavyweights" like Chardog and Salisbury steak, Filipino, continental and American classic breakfasts.

Flamers started operations in 1987 in Jacksonville, Florida, and now has over 80 international outlets. The first Philippine outlet was at the Alabang Festival Supermall, but that is being redone, so this Meralco Avenue outlet is it—and an obvious success. At lunchtime it was full—of teenagers, yes, but also businessmen, women in bank uniforms, families. Nobody seems to fear Mad Cow Disease, which Ricky assures us is impossible in his shop, because his Australian beef comes from grass-fed cattle.

So go, Brother, skid, wham, bite and flame. Hamburgers are here to stay.

Bravo to Italian wine

MANILA'S Italian restaurant-bar Bravo, located at Nakpil corner Adriatico in Malate and at Festival Mall, Alabang, is offering a 20-percent discount per bottle on their exciting wine selection in August. Connoisseurs also get to enjoy free *stuzzichini* with every bottle ordered. These delicious appetizers can be a choice of the *gnocco fritto*, the *crostini* with *pomodoro* dip or the Italian flag with its pesto, *pomodoro* and cream cheese spreads.

Or early birds can unwind on weekends with a Prosecco Champagne Brunch on Saturdays and Sundays starting at 10:30 a.m. with free-flowing sparkling wine.

Venetian Alessandro Anese is on hand to guide guests through the intricacies of fine Italian wines. His family's vineyards in Venice were instrumental to fine-tuning his taste in wines and he shares his knowledge with Bravo's habitués.

Alessandro explains that while red wine is generally associated with meats and white with seafood, Italians have traditionally paired types of wines with particular dishes. Valpolicella, a dry, full-bodied red wine spiced with cherries, is taken with tomato-based pastas. "It is generally drank during colder months, as with the Cabernet," he says.

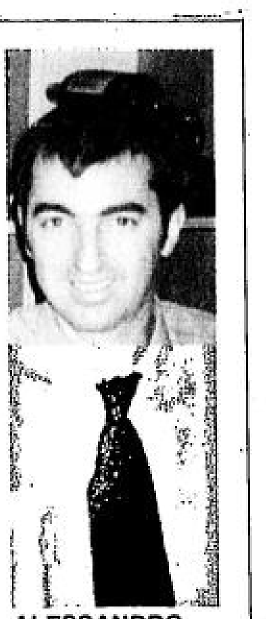
This wine, like the Valpolicella, comes from Veneto although the Cabernet is spiced with black cherry, plum and subtle herbs, making it "softer." With its slightly herbaceous scent, it is ideal for cold cuts—salamis and Parma ham, roast meats and poultry.

"We are particularly proud of our Rosso Piceno, which is very popular in central Italy but is hard to come by outside the Marche region where it is produced," he said. This red wine comes from the Sangiovese grapes, the source of Chianti and Montepulciano wines.

The white wines include Pinot Veneto and Tocai Friulano, which goes very well with light meals and fish.

The Fragolino Roso is a sparkling dessert wine with strawberry and blueberry undertones best served when chilled.

Bravo's wine fest is ongoing until the end of August.



ALESSANDRO Anese, wine connoisseur

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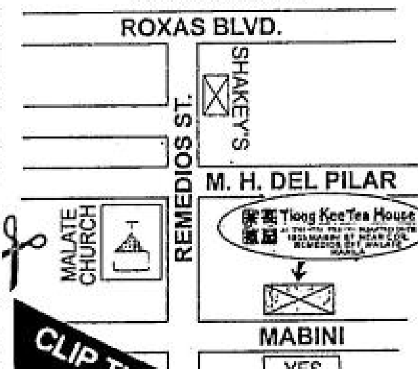

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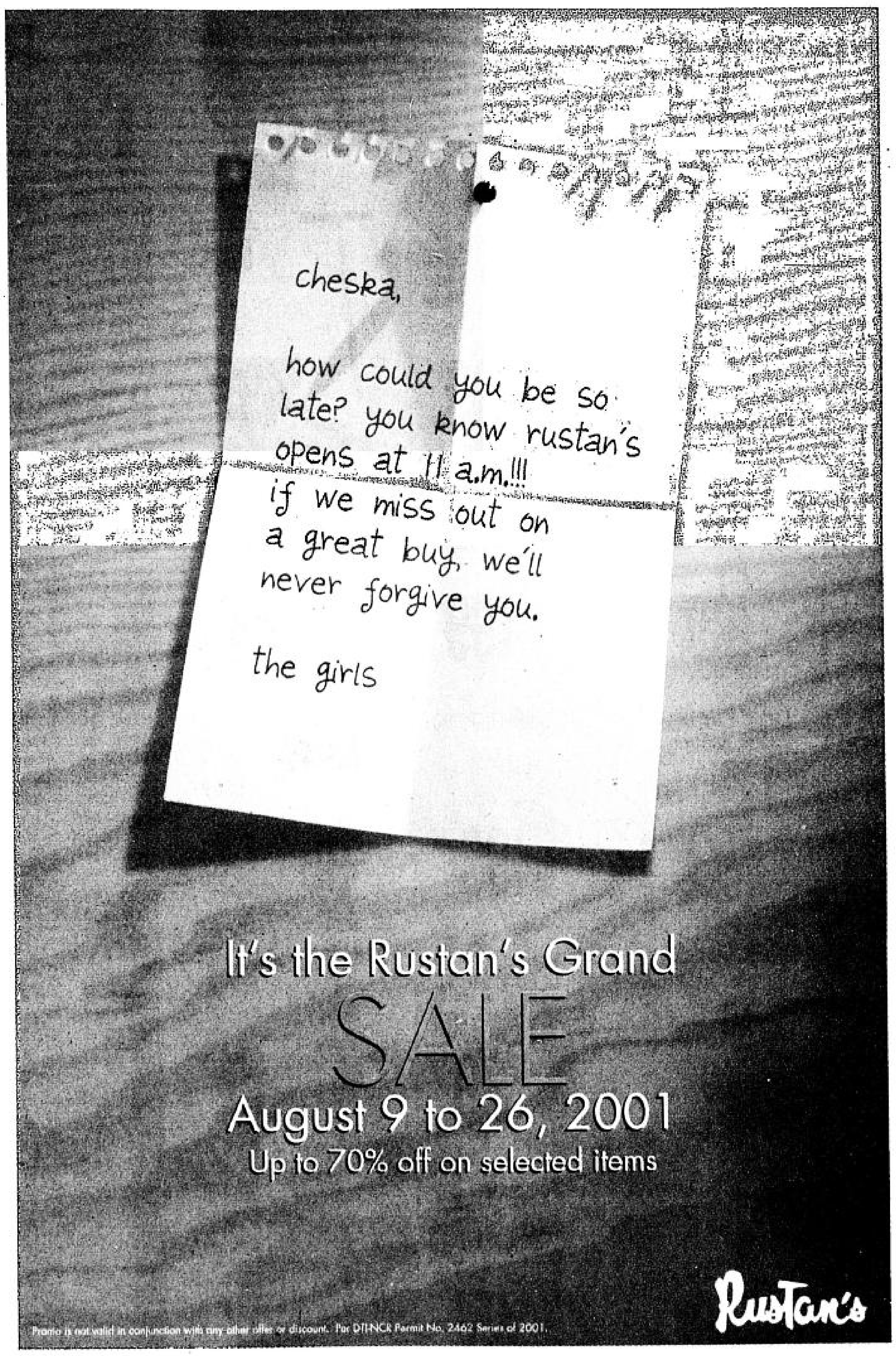
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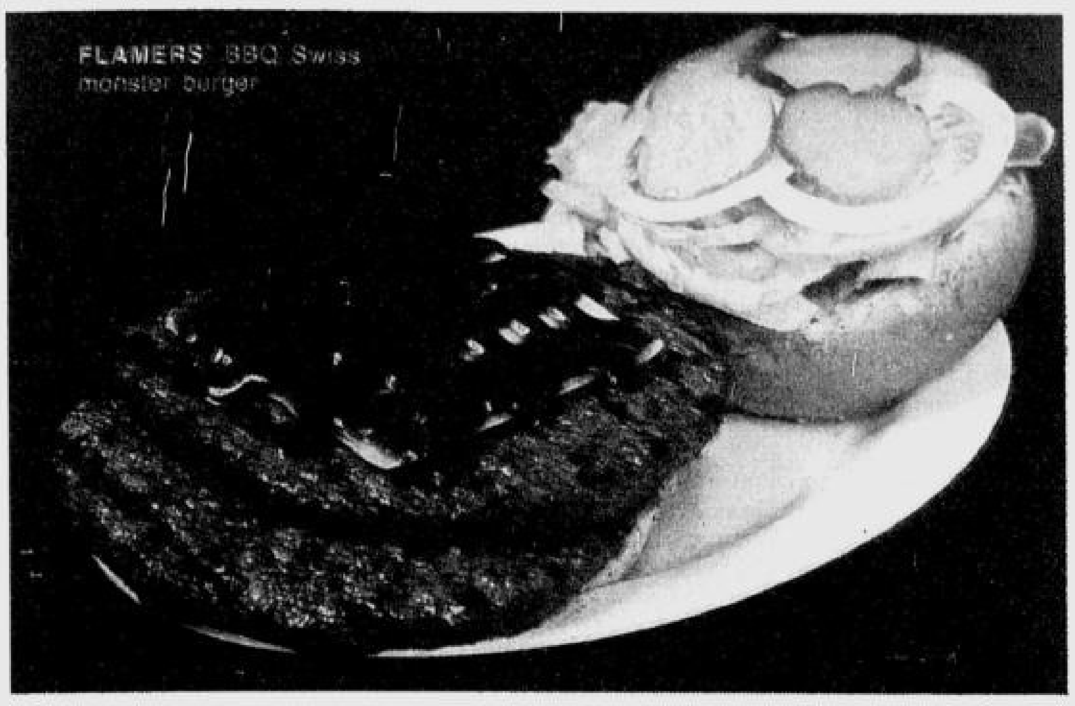
So many things have been done and added to beef patties since they were first served in Hamburg


FLAMERS BBQ Swiss monster burger

Reinventing the burger

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

THE HAMBURGER. Who can live without it these days? Its name first turned up in print toward 1890, its origin apparently Hamburg, where it was first known as the Hamburg steak. The St. Louis World Fair of 1904 "was a significant launching pad for the hamburger on a bun as we know it" (The Oxford Companion to Food, 1999).

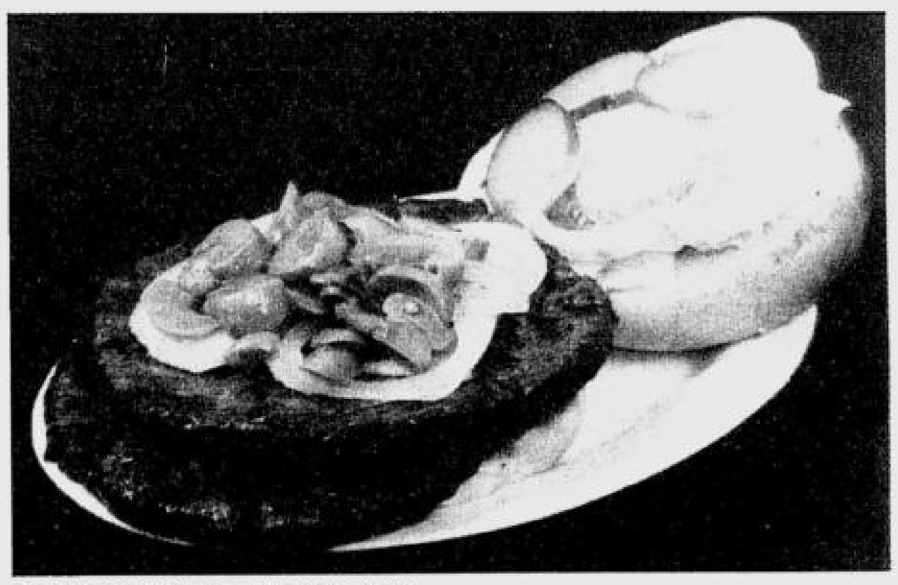
I have sampled many versions, the latest being the Flamers Burger (Millennium Place, Meralco Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City), to which I was drawn by the news that it was charcoal-grilled. That is the peak of hamburger-ness for me. It must be the dim unconscious dating back to prehistory that makes me associate good meat with charcoal fires, the sealed-in juices, the hint of coal taste, the conquest by fire.

My Ateneo students in Critical Writing agreed with me. Antonio Cabanero said, "one qualification for my perfect burger is that it has to be grilled. Neither fried nor toasted but grilled." Law Aritao specifies that it be all-beef, grilled before your eyes to the "done-ness" of choice, with at least one slice of cheese and served in a soft bun with sesame seeds or even better, small oatmeal bits.

We therefore embarked on cooperative research, each one setting to taste anew, reflect on and report on a different burger. John Aguilar reported on "The Brother of all Burgers," Brothers Burger (Meralco Avenue or Rockwell), the brainchild of brothers Quito, Martin and DJ Jose, who refuse to compromise freshness by serving already-cooked patties. Quito is a chef (California Culinary Academy) with classical French/Italian cuisine as specialty. Thus the continental touches: crumbled bacon and blue cheese or honey Dijon dip for the Pounder (a pound, almost ½ kilo of beef), "juicy and not oily, with the burn from the grill giving the beef just the right amount of kick and its smokey flavor."

Law Aritao's "Beefeater's Dream" is that of Skidder's, (President Avenue, BF Homes, Parañaque), which also has "some of the best milkshakes in the known universe." The 1/3-pound burger is grilled before your eyes and served on buttered, lightly toasted buns with a choice of free toppings—onions, garlic, tomatoes, pickles and more. Law considers the 1/3-pound cheeseburger

REINVENTING/ p.C3


MUSHROOM Swiss monster burger

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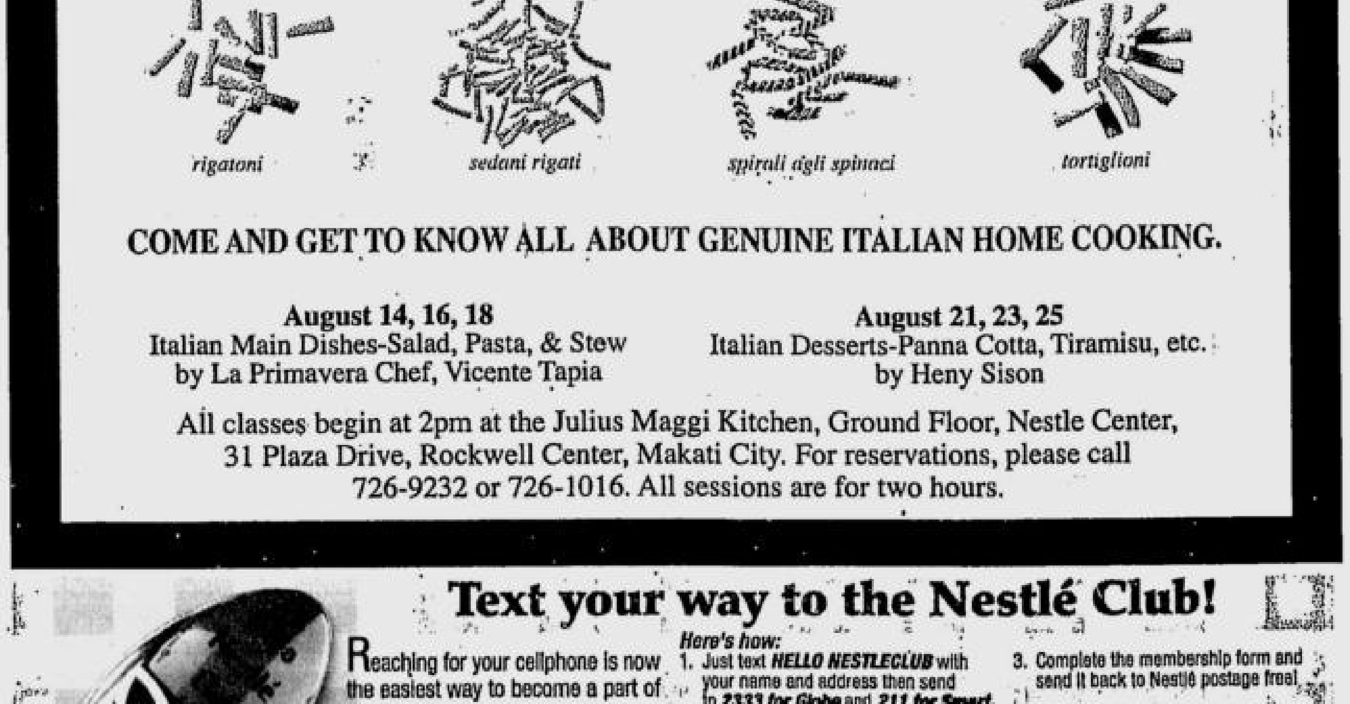
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